To

MY PARENTS

Who taught me to love and live the Hindu Culture

The Huxley Press, Madras.

HINDU CULTURE

and have treated our distant cousins in fur and feathers so badly that beyond doubt, if they were able to formulate a religion, they would depict the devil in human form. It is a pity that our biologists, instead of singing paeons to Progress and thereby stultifying their own speculations, have not preached us sermons on the sin of racial self-idolatry, a topic which really arises out of their studies." Indeed the modern anthropolatry is fast becoming a fetish. The fact is that Science and Democracy are means, not ends. Material progress does not necessarily imply ethical and spiritual progress. Real freedom is not mere absence of restraint but the opportunity of each to achieve the good of all and to realise God. The Hindu view is the wiser and the truer one. It asserts the cyclical law of progress, the superiority of ethical over material progress, and the realisation of perfection as opposed to mere unending progress.

Western thinkers and writers have often hurled at the East the phrases stationary, unprogressive, custom-ridden, illiberal, stagnant, inert and lifeless. The East could easily retaliate and say that the West is revolutionary, hasty, volatile, mischievously active, ever-agitated, and bent on exploitation and conquest.

But apart from these unmeaning phrases of abuse, progress can never be anything more than an intermediate ideal and can never be divorced from ethical considerations. It is the raising of progress to the dignity of an ultimate ideal and the emphasis upon its aspect of power as separate from its aspects of duty and of love that have been responsible for the moral ruin of the West and are now threatening the moral ruin of India.

Much confusion of thought has resulted from confusing evolution and progress. Evolution implies merely continuity and transformation. It applies as much to reversion as to progress. If we eliminate absolute ethical standards from the evolution of physical life or eliminate absolute spiritual standards from the evolution of ethical life, then life becomes bestial and materialistic. The fact that the West is now bossing the show is an utterly irrelevant fact. The East was bossing the show before, and further East and West are merely relative terms. We can talk of racial cultures as interrelated aspects of universal culture, but to over-emphasise East and West as antagonistic poles of human activity is as foolish as it is dangerous. The modern confusions of thought caused by the confusion of evolution and

progress and by the confusion of imperial dominance and. real enlightenment must be understood and removed if we are to have correct notions of the significance and value of life.

Racial and cultural conflicts have been till now the means adopted by the spirit of man for self-expression and self-realisation. The method has been as wasteful as it has been barbarous. There is no divine sanction or basis for it. It is simply the manifestation and the result of the *rajasic* and the *tamasic* gunas. But the slow triumphs of *sattwa* guna are the only means of universal and national good as of individual good. The fact that till now progress has been identified with mere force and intellect is no ground for the future being under the sway of the same confusion of ideas.

It is wrong to say that the Hindu idea is that it is only through conflict that the spirit realises itself. The soul is perfect consciousness and bliss. Its attachments, immemorial and compelling, have been responsible for the rhythms and discords of life. If the rhythms of *sattwic* life prevail over the discords of *tamasic* and *rajasic* life self-realisation and joy are near. Else they are far away. Progress is simply the dominance of the *sattwic* over

tamasic and *rajasic* impulses. Decay is simply the dominance of the latter over the former. In India more stress has always been laid on spiritual progress than on material progress.

Real progress should therefore not be confused with mere change or even with mere prosperity. It is more. It is increasing fitness for the realisation of God. Universal education, absence of poverty, prevalence of art, equality before the law, equality of opportunity, justice, general longevity, a low rate of mortality, popular government, representative institutions, individual liberty, respect for law, a proud sense and possession of freedom, and other elements are no doubt implied in progress. But they are the outer indications and not the inner essence. A high and noble brow, bright, expressive and radiant eyes, an acquiline nose, mobile and crimson lips, fine teeth, abundant tresses, a glowing complexion, erectness of stature, perfect bust, long arms, and swinging gait are indications of perfect life but are not life itself.

Progress, in short, implies not merely increase in power but increase in humanity and divinity. It implies not merely the acquisition by man of the arts of building houses, of fire, of agriculture, of working in metals,

and of social and political organisation, but also art ethics. and religion. The latter is the nobler and higher aspect of the two. As Mr. Marett well says: "I find the philosophic, that is, the ultimate and truest, touchstone of human progress, namely, in the capacity for that ennobling form of experience whereby we become conscious co-workers and co-helpers in an age-long, world-wide striving after the good."

The mind of man, in its work of concurrent and recurrent analysis and synthesis, looks before and after and pines for what is not. It sometimes re-enthrones the past, and, at other times, it overturns the past and rushes towards an unknown future. It is therefore the nature of the human mind as a whole that determines human progress. The Hindu conception is that progress is cyclical for the cosmos and upwards or downwards for the individual. An individual may lower himself despite his high environment and raise himself despite his low environment. This explains why some of the arch-demoniacal forces were in active operation in the *krita yuga* and why some of the greatest saints and men of God-realisation have been born in the *kali yuga*.

The self-renewals of the human mind are

partly determined by its past acquisitions and partly by its new concentrations. The past instructs and guides, the present propels, and the future calls. The absolute golden age is in the soul; past and present and future are only relative and are but diverse approximations to it in diverse degrees.

If we study carefully the march of human progress, we can easily realise the predominance of political and economic progress in the West and the predominance of spiritual and cultural progress in the East. This does not imply the absence of cultural progress in the West or of political progress in the East. The difference is one of emphasis than of content. It is a mistake to suppose that India has denied change. The very word *Jagat* means the ever-moving. All that India asserts is that even as God is eternal, the *sadhanas* of ethical life and spiritual life are eternal. The flux consists not in the change of the Law but in the flux and reflux of the human mind towards it and away from it. India has been progressive, more so culturally than politically, but she has never forgotten that the Law is not a shifting horizon but is like the over-arching sky full of fixed splendours to guide, illumine and inspire.

The modern worship of rationalism, materialism, industrialism and nationalism may banish from minds maddened by the wine of power and enjoyment the older cults and faiths. The tide of imperial domination has now flowed East and now flowed West, and different races have been carried on its glittering crest to predestined dooms and deposited in distant lands. He who points to largeness of territory as proof of largeness of soul is a pitiful self-deluded man. Imperial Rome was not culturally greater than conquered Greece. The East was victor before and may be victor again. But what has all this to do with progress? The West seeks to westernise the East in the hope that a westernised East will cease to be a foe and will become a friend. But what the world wants and what will please God is not a westernised East or an Easternised West but a general prevalence of *sattwic* nature, each race presenting and preserving its mental, moral, emotional, artistic, philosophic and religious approach to the throne of Grace.

Man has progressed on the material side from being a labourer with hands to being a labourer with tools. He has tried various forms of social and political organisation and

is still in a state of experimentation. The modern era has contributed the ideals of scientific knowledge and social philanthropy to enrich the significance of progress. But the Renaissance and the Revolution have given to progress a deflection that has to be corrected and set right. Selfish nationalism and a mechanical conception of life are the two great evils of to-day to be eliminated by the hastening future age.

The modern student and observer of western life and literature are likely to have an exaggerated notion of modern progress. It is no doubt true that science has revealed the reign of law in nature. Industrial progress has brought to us new gifts from earth and new masteries over machinery. Political progress has resulted in an increasing tranfer of power to its real source and centre—the people. But science must not be allowed to delude us into the belief that the world is a mere self-propelled mechanism. Industry should not be allowed to enslave and degrade human nature. Co-operation must supplant competition. The ascetic ideal must duly balance the ideal of multiplication of wants. Industry should not be treated as the mere fulfilment of contracts but as a service to humanity and as a form of

worship of God. Politics should be realised as a fragment of life and not the whole of life. The modern era is certainly not great in art or philosophy or religion. It is only ignorance of the real nature of progress that is responsible for the deification of modern progress as something unparalleled, unique and supreme.

CHAPTER II

INDIA: A HOME OF PROGRESS

IF we study the past history of India and the world properly and dispassionately, then it will become clear to us that India was a true home of real progress. Even Mr. S. C. Mookerjee is swept away into the following description of her greatness: "India of the ages—India of the sages—of snow-white antiquity rivalling that of her own Himalayas—sacred Mother of the Vedas and the Upanishads, on whose breast the spiritual waters of the Sankhya and the Yoga, commingling with the noblest and the best of the teachings of Buddha and Sankara, have produced an Ethico-Psychic system of rational philosophy at once altruistic, all-embracing and transcendental which, revealing the riddle of the Universe, leads the initiate and the seeker to the key of the mystery of life and death—Her we adore. No country can show a greater or a more heroic record than India for taking systematised steps for the uplift of the sordid, selfish, clayey, fleshly, brutish spirit in man and so subdue, shape, and

polish the animal in him by the infusion of that real light of self-knowledge, self-culture, self-reliance and righteousness as to make him the very image of God. In this alone, if not in anything else, she still stands as the Queen-Instructress of the world, unparalleled, unique, and withal, grossly misunderstood. The very embodiment of mystery has that sibylline smile playing about her countenance, suggestive of supreme confidence in herself, born of that deep conviction, which when given utterance to means that 'even these days shall pass away.' Hers has been the civilising influence that soothed, tamed, and humanised the savage Huns, Sakas, Jats, Scythians and other wild and fierce tribes that came to rob and plunder her but stayed on to worship her as mother, feeling proud to be assimilated and absorbed into her body politic. From time immemorial, she has been beckoning, and still beckons, to all human children to come unto her and drink of her breast and find contentment, joy and peace through the pathway of that knowledge which comes out of practising universal love and in devotion to service unselfishly rendered in the cause of humanity. Not only to the Asiatic races but to those of Greece and Egypt

she has been the giver of Light, Religion and Culture. Her handloom products of cotton and silk, her wares of art and craft were prized in Imperial Rome, Athens and Alexandria, not to speak of Asiatic centres. India in the past was a land flowing with milk and honey. It had become the veritable land of Paradise not only for her own children but for all her admirers. She captivated the attraction of all her admirers. The echo of her paradisic condition reverberated through the uplands and high mountain ranges of Asia down the whispering galleries of the West, and on the rebound it got materialised, long after decay and degeneracy had overpowered her children in the Imperial Moghul Delhi, where it came to be inscribed on the walls of her Dewany Khas in bejewelled Persian characters " If there be Paradise on earth it is here, it is here, it is here. "

The very situation of India and her mild climate and fertile soil show that she had been marked out to be one of the true homes of progress in the world. She has always glittered with gold and gems and gorgeous emerald dress, lit up by the golden sunlight. She is an epitome of the whole world. Count B'jornst-Jerna says well. " Nature, too, in this glorious

country is chequered with variety and clad in glowing colours:. see the luxuriance of her tropical vegetation and the hurricane of her monsoon; see the majesty of her snow-covered Himalayas and the dryness of her deserts; see the immense plains of Hindustan and the scenery of her lofty mountains; but, above all, see the immense age of her history and the poetry of her recollections". She was predestined by her position and her climate and fertility to be the happy home of arts and arms, to be the dwelling place of a nation of philosophers, to be the citadel of universal love and righteousness.

The Hindu civilisation is older than the memory of man. Its origin was prior to recorded history. Even the most severely sceptic and rationalistic historian has to project his mind to a time ten thousand years ago to peer at the shimmering darkness of its commencement. Even to-day it remains "not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigour." It has seen the birth and the death of many civilisations and is predestined to last for ever.

Foreign observers have borne frequent and continuous testimony to the high personal character of the Hindus. Arrian says: "No

Indian was ever known to tell an untruth". Megasthenes observed with admiration the absence of slavery in India, the chastity of the women, and the courage of the men. Hiouenthsang says: "The Indians are distinguished by the straightforwardness and honesty of their character. With regard to riches, they never take anything unjustly; with regard to justice, they make even excessive concessions: straightforwardness is the leading feature of their administration". Idrisi says: "The Indians are naturally inclined to justice, and never depart from it in their actions. Their good faith, honesty and fidelity to their engagements are well-known and they are so famous for these qualities that people flock to their country from every side". Abul Fazul says: "The Hindus are religious, affable, courteous to strangers, cheerful, enamoured of knowledge, lovers of justice, able in business, grateful, admirers of truth and of unbounded fidelity in all their dealings." Sir John Malcolm says: "Their truth is as remarkable as their courage". Col. Dixon praises "their fidelity, truthfulness, honesty, their determined valour, their simple loyalty, and an extreme and almost touching devotion when put upon their honour." Niebuher has stated that "the

Indians are really the most tolerant nation in the world.". Mr. Mercer said: "They (the Hindus) are mild in their disposition, polished in their general manners; in their domestic relations, kind and affectionate". Abbe Dubois says: "The Hindus are not in want of improvement in the discharge of social duties amongst themselves. They understand this point as well as and perhaps better than Europeans." Warren Hastings states: "The Hindus are gentle, benevolent, more susceptible of gratitude for kindness shown to them than prompted to vengeance for wrongs inflicted and as exempt from the worst propensities of human passion as any people upon the face of the earth". Professor Monier Williams says: "I have found no people in Europe more religious, none more patiently persevering in common duties." Mr. Elphinstone says: "If we compare them (Hindus) with our own (English people), the absence of drunkenness and of immodesty in their other vices, will leave the superiority in purity of manners on the side least flattering to our self-esteem". Mr. Ward says: "In their forms of address and behaviour in company the Hindus must be ranked amongst the politest nations". Mr. Burnouf says that the "Indians are a nation rich in spiritual gifts

and endowed with peculiar sagacity and penetration". I cannot conclude this long series of extracts extending over historic time better than by giving the two following famous quotations. Bishop Heber says: "To say that the Hindus are deficient in any essential feature of a civilised people is an assertion which I can scarcely suppose to be made by any one who has lived with them. They are decidedly by nature mild, pleasing, intelligent race, sober and parsimonious, and, where an object is held out to them, most industrious and persevering. . . . . . They are men of high and gallant courage, courteous, intelligent, and most eager for knowledge and improvement, with a remarkable aptitude for the abstract sciences, geometry, astronomy etc., and for imitative arts, painting and sculpture, dutiful towards their parents, affectionate to children, more easily affected by kindness and attention to their wants and feelings than almost any man I have met with". Sir Thomas Munro states: "I do not exactly understand what is meant by the civilisation of the Hindus. In the knowledge of the theory and practice of good Government, and in an education which, by banishing prejudice and superstition, opens the mind to receive

instruction of every kind, they are inferior to Europeans. But if a good system of agriculture, unrivalled manufacturing skill, a capacity to produce whatever can contribute to either luxury or convenience, schools established in every village for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, the general practice of hospitality and charity amongst each other, and above all, a treatment of the female sex, full of confidence, respect and delicacy are among the signs which denote a civilised people, even the Hindus are not inferior to the nations of Europe, and if civilisation is to become an article of trade between the two countries, I am convinced that this country (England) will gain by the import cargo".

This is not all. India has been recognised as the mother of chivalry and patriotism and valour and heroism. Colonel Tod says about *Rakhibandhan:* "There is a delicacy in this custom with which the bond uniting the cavaliers of Europe to the service of the fair in the days of chivalry will not compare". He says further: "There is not a petty state in Rajputana that has not had its own Thermopylae and scarcely a city that has not produced its own Leonidas". Mr. Elphinstone says even of the Indians of to-day:

"They often display bravery unsurpassed by the most warlike nations and will always throw away their lives for any consideration of religion or honour". Colonel Tod says again: "The name of 'country' carried with it a magical power in the mind of the Rajput. The name of his wife or mistress must never be mentioned at all, nor that of his country but with respect or his sword is instantly unsheathed". A more ancient testimony is that of Abul Fazul who says: "Their character shines brightest in adversity. Their soldiers (Rajputs) know not what it is to flee from the field of battle, but when the success of the combat becomes doubtful, they dismount from their horses and throw away their lives in payment of the debt of valour". This valour went hand in hand with delicacy and refinement and reverence in the treatment of womanhood. Professor Wilson says: "And it may be confidently asserted that in no nation of antiquity were women held in so much esteem as amongst the Hindus". He says further: "Their right to propertyis fully recognised and fully secured". Colonel Tod says: "The superficial observer who applies his own standard to the customs of all nations, laments with an affected philanthrophy, the degraded condi-

tion of the Hindu female, in which sentiment he would find her little disposed to join. He particularly laments her want of liberty and calls her seclusion, imprisonment. From the knowledge I possess of the freedom, the respect, the happiness which Rajput women enjoy, I am by no means inclined to deplore their state as one of captivity." About the refinement and sweetness of Hindu womanhood, Sir George Birdwood wrote some time ago in the Asiatic Quarterly Review: "Perfect daughters, wives and mothers, after the severely disciplined, self-sacrificing Hindu ideal, remaining modestly at home, as the proper sphere of their duties, unknown beyond their families, and seeking in the happiness of their children their greatest pleasure and in the reverence of their husbands the amaranthine crown of a woman's truest glory."

Such has been the unbroken chorus of admiration from abroad. Nor were we wanting in self-respect and clear vision of our greatness and uniqueness. The clarion call of patriotic love sounds forth in the line: *Jananee Janmabhumischa Swargât api Gariyasëe* (the mother and the motherland are dearer and nobler and sweeter far than heaven). A great stanza says:

Desésmin Bharatè Janma Prâpya Mânush-
[yamadhruvam,
Nakuryâdâtmanah Sreyah Tenatwa Van-
[chîtaschiram !

(If, after attaining the fleeting gift of human birth in this land of Bharata, a man does not achieve the highest auspiciousness, truly has his soul been cheated by him for a long time to come).

The Srimad Bhagawatha tells us:

Ethê Punyathamah Desah Harèrarchasrita-
[scha Yé
Ethan Desan Nishèvètha Sréyaskamò Hya-
[bheekshnasah !

(These are holy realms devoted to the worship of God. Dwell in them if you are desirous of the highest auspiciousness).

Last, but not least, must be mentioned the following fine poem by Rabindranath Tagore:

" O thou, who art the world's delight,
Motherland of our ancestors
Whose lands with solar rays are bright
Thy feet the blue sea waters love,
Thy verdant robes the breezes weave,
Thy brow Himalaya mount
Crown'd with its snows of purest white.
The day first dawns within thy skies,
The Vedic hymns first here took rise,

Poesy, wisdom, stories, creeds
In thy woodlands first saw the light.
Everlasting is thy renown
Who feed'st the world and feed'st thy own.

The Jumna and the Ganga sweet
Carry thy mercy day and night".

Such has been the national character and such has been the uniqueness of India amongst the countries of the world. Nor was India ever wanting in an efficient and well-knit social and political organisation, or in high distinction in science, literature, art, philosophy, and religion. I shall deal in some detail later on with the Hindu social organisation. The Hindu ideal of political organisation disclosed the same perfection of sane and balanced life that is evident in the Hindu attitude towards life and the Hindu treatment of womanhood. The first thing to remember in regard to Hindu political life is the clear realisation of the difference between the function of government and the machinery of government. In the modern era there is an almost pathetic pre-occupation with the latter while the former is almost lost sight of and forgotten. True political freedom should not be confounded with mere representative institutions. The

machinery of government should not be confused with proper and progressive government. True freedom is the liberty of each to regulate his own life so as to further the best interests of each and of all, both here and hereafter. Over-government and over-administration, a tendency to look to an ever-shifting government for every trifling act of public good, and the mental attitude which regards an ever-active, ever-changing and ever-transforming legislature as the only means of progress—these are some of the gifts of the new age. These tendencies take away from men all leisure, inclination and energy for the joys of art, and the bliss of calm and meditative spiritual realisation; and if the balance-sheet of national achievement and happiness is prepared, the loss will be found to be more than the gain. National defence, national justice and national peace are the proper tasks of government which is merely the channel of the communal will. It is precisely on these aspects that attention is less and less concentrated while attention is being more and more concentrated on the machinery of government. As Herbert Spencer writes: "The daily scandals of our judicial system, which often brings ruin instead of restitution, and

frightens away multitudes who need protection, result in large measure from the pre-occupation of statesmen and politicians with non-essential things, while the all-essential thing passes almost unheeded". The Government should be a means of training and guiding the desires and energies of men. It ought to be reformatory as well as punitive. It should be ethical as well as efficient. It must be the expression of the spiritual man rather than of the animal man, of self-restraint rather than of self-indulgence. *Over-government is necessary only in* the case of peoples with insufficient socialisation. The world has yet to win for itself a political ideal in which national self-restraint will have a larger place than national exploitation, in which the sphere of government will be limited to the bare minima of national defence, national peace and national justice because the socialisation and spiritualisation of life will render it unnecessary to have the existing types of over-government, and in which the political appliances of freedom will be of a simple character and will not absorb all the energies of the people in the mere task of constituting, watching and dissolving legislatures from year's end to year's end.

It is quite erroneous to say that in Hindu

India there was no civic and political freedom. Even the most prejudiced and purblind critics of India within and without admit that India has always had intellectual and spiritual freedom which is an essential element in political freedom. Without it all the electioneering campaigns in the world are a delusion and a snare. The fires of the Inquisition in Spain and of Queen Mary's reign in England more than counterbalance the vaunted growth of imperial domination or of representative government. Even as regards the purely secular elements in civic and political freedom, Hindu India was not wanting at all. In this respect the nations of the West have hypnotised, through the new educational methods and the new dominations, the educated men of India into the belief that the utmost measure of civic and political freedom obtains in the West. But is that the truth? No, by no means. Manhood suffrage is not necessarily full freedom. Men

"Wear the name
Of freedom graven on a heavier chain."

Conscriptions compel even the dissenters from war to fight. Monopolies get legitimised through purchased legistatures. Open class wars are going on under seemingly unselfish

inspirations but swayed, actuated and impelled by selfish motives. Under the hypnotic sway of the words 'Efficiency' and 'Organisation' the free (?) peoples forge new chains about their hands and feet, clank the chains and shout about their new-won freedom to be bound in heavier chains. This was not the kind of civic and political freedom that Hindu India desired or deserved or possessed. The freedom sought by it was the freedom for each to follow Dharma, to follow his ordained calling in a spirit of co-operation and love for His sake, to increase love and decrease desire by a glad performance of duty as an act of obedience to God and as a love-offering unto God. As Mr. E. B. Havell well says in his *Ancient and Mediaeval Architecture of India*: "It is true that Indo-Aryan liberty was not of the crude western type represented by the formula 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'. It was liberty for every man, whether king or peasant, to follow his own Dharma—the Dharma being that which long tradition and the wisest of Aryan law givers, who knew Indian history and the Indian people, had taught every man within the Aryan pale to regard as his duty to God, the state, his house-hold, and himself. And the constitution

which preserved this fine ideal of liberty was the Aryan miniature republic, with its council of Five, which was the political unit of Indo-Aryan government ".

It seems to me that there was great wisdom in this conception of civic and political freedom. Local self-government of a highly evolved and admirable character was achieved in very early times. Arrian states with admiration that every Indian was free. Lieutenant Colonel Mark Wilks states that "each Hindu township is, and indeed always was, a particular community or petty republic by itself", and that "the whole of India is nothing more than one vast congeries of such republics". I do not propose to go here into the details of village administration by panchayats, fascinating though the subject be. Sir George Birdwood wrote some time ago that "the village communities remain in full municipal vigour all over the peninsula." Sir Charles Metcalfe called them "little republics". Such decentralisation, though it was unconscious, was a source of national self-preservation through the vicissitudes of Indian political life. In Elphinstone's *History of India* it is stated: "But among all these changes, the townships remain entire, and are the indestructible atoms from an aggregate of which

the most extensive empires are composed". Sir Charles Metcalfe quoted above says in his *Minute in 1832*: "This union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little estate in itself, has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India, through all the revolutions and changes which they have suffered, and is in a high degree conducive to their happiness and *to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence*".

Let no one suppose that these minor units were not welded into larger units or that the system of village administration was not strong and varied. Such words as *Gana, Puga, Sreshti, Samuha, Parishad* etc., represent well-definedide as and institutions. Guilds, which were social and industrial units existed in India from the earliest times. The word '*Sreshti*' is used in the Vedas as meaning the chief of a guild. The ancient Hindu law books provide clearly for the taking and training of apprentices. See Narada V, 16 to 21; Brihaspathi, XVI, 6; Manu, IV, 16 and VII, 268-300; Gautama, II, 43-44. The education of the apprentices was at once direct, practical, and moral as well as professional. The above methods of conserving communal life and

culture were of great value and had a powerful effect on the development of Hindu cultural life. The local bodies attended to all the local needs and administered the public funds and saved local life from famine and disruption, while the King kept the public peace and saved the national life from foreign aggression. Public spirit and communal service were the leading features of Indian public life from the earliest times.

At the same time Hindu genius attended also to the consolidation of the central government. It is no doubt true that before the consolidation was finally achieved invasions came and threw everything into disorder. But this fact in no way lessons the importance of the idea and of the working out of the idea. The conceptions involved in the words *Mandalika, Chakravarthi* and *Sarvabhauma* show this clearly. The phrase '*Asamudra Kshitisânâm*' (lords of the country from sea to sea) found in Canto I of Kalidasa's Raghuvamsa is even more expressive and clear. Sister Nivedita has well said that small and compact nations will arrive at national unity and national government early, while large and continental countries like India must necessarily do so late, and that this lateness is no sign of weakness but a

sign of natural and healthy development and adolescence.

So far as the types of government evolved in Hindu India are concerned there was every conceivable variety. The Republican type was not unknown. Hiouen Tsang states that in Kapilavasthu there was no king and that each town appointed its governing authority. Republics used to be called *Ganas Gauarayani.* The Aitareya Brahmana refers to the *vairajya* or kingless states. The Mahabharata refers in Santhi Parva Chapter CVII to strong states founded on equality. The Artha Sastra refers to *Kuta Sanghas* and *Ganas.* The Buddhist records also show their existence. But the normal and usual type of government was the monarchical type. There was no absolute monarchy in Hindu India at any time, though the King was regarded as one in whom *Vishnu Kala* a ray of Vishnu's glory, existed. (See *Naranam cha Naradhipah*—I am the King among men Gita Chapter X). He was not autocratic in theory or in practice. The *Samiti* or the general assembly and the *Sabha* or the executive council guided, advised, and even controlled him. In the Ramayana King Dasaratha takes their advice to install Shri Rama as the heir apparent (Yuvaraja). This

was not all. The King was only the chief executive power in the nation. He was bound to uphold, establish and administer the Dharma. Further, he was bound to follow the opinion of the Cabinet of ministers. Chandragupta had regular departments of state which were looked after by ministers with portfolios. Mr. K. P. Jayaswal says: "It is a law and a principle of Hindu politics that the King cannot act without the approval and co-operation of the council of ministers". An impetuous King may disregard them, but they could get him removed and depose him. There were instances of the people themselves doing such an act. The lives of Vena and Mihiragula show this beyond the possibility of doubt. Thus the Law was above the King; the Council guided, advised and controlled him; and the people watched him and prevented his oppression and tyranny. From the Mahabharata, Shanti Parva, LIX, 106-7 we learn that every king had to take the following coronation oath: "I shall see to the development of the country, regarding it always as God. Whatever laws exist and are dictated by Dharma I will adopt and enforce. I shall never be arbitrary in my actions". Sukra niti, Kamandakiya niti, and Kautilya's Artha

Sastra show how liberal and progressive was the conception of sovereignty in Hindu India.

It is no doubt true that the modern elective machinery did not exist in regard to the central-government. But this is not so important a matter as it is sought to be made out to be. As already stated above what matters is the fact and not the machinery. The fact was that the normal type of central government was a limited monarchy—a monarchy which was limited by effective and powerful safeguards which could never be overturned. We owe to the political genius of the British nation the added ideas of a representative central government and an all-pervasive electoral machinery. But these are mere matters of detail and nothing more.

There are two other matters which must be referred to when dealing with Hindu political ideals. The Hindu genius provided for a national militia drawn from only one section of the people, while making it clear that every one should fight in defence of home and country against *Atatayins* (invaders bent on ruin). This prevented violent disruptions of national life by withdrawing the peasant from the plough and the poet from his dream to cut and thrust and parry. Universal conscription

begins as a defensive measure and ends as an offensive onslaught on others. Pacific ideals cannot thrive in a land where every one is forced to undergo military training and is educated to admire the profession of arms. It is no doubt true that the disappearance in a large measure of the Kṣhatriyaṣ from the Hindu polity was a source of downfall. But this does not affect the value of the above-said idea. Again, a frame-work of civilised law was provided and communal customs were allowed to grow up to supplement the laws. This method was far better than the modern legislative method of permissive and compulsory legislation by bare majorities which are more often led by passion and prejudice than by wisdom and love. Self-grown and inoffensive and unadharmic changes are far better than legislative hailstorms showered over the bewildered heads of the people from the legislative heavens by vociferous legislators.

Hindu military science was perfected in ancient times and was a puissant means of peace and prosperity at home and abroad. Not only had each army its *chaturanga* (infantry, cavalry, elephant battalions, and chariot battalions); but firearms were extensively used. Gunpowder was a Hindu inven-

tion. Aircrafts were not unknown. But the most important aspects of the Hindu science of war are its humanity and its organisation. Megasthenes says: "Whereas among other nations it is usual in the contests of war to ravage the soil, and thus to reduce it to an uncultivated waste, among the Indians, on the contrary, by whom husbandmen are regarded as a class that is sacred and inviolable, the tillers of the soil, even if battle is raging in the neighbourhood, are undisturbed by any sense of danger; for the combatants on either side, in waging the conflict, make carnage of each other, but allow those engaged in husbandry to remain quite unmolested. Besides they never ravage an enemy's land with fire nor cut down its trees". In regard to military organisation, we may well refer to an important indication contained in Kalidasa's Raghuvamsa.

Màruprushtanyudambhamsi Navyassupra-tharah Nadeeh !
Vipinàni Prakásani sakthimatuat chakara [sah !!
(IV 31)

[By reason of his might, during his military march he (Raghu) made deserts full of watering places, made unfordable rivers easy to cross, and cleared the forests hindering his march].

The Hindu legal Code, though it has not been as carefully studied as the Code of Justinian and the Code Napoleon, is as valuable and as full of enlightened rules and regulations as they are. It is suited to the needs of an ethical, progressive and energetic community which bestows equal attention on things here and hereafter and seeks to rise through society to God. The great Hindu law books deal with âchâra, vyavahâra, and prâyaschitta (injunctions for daily adoption, legal procedure, and expiatory acts) and have thus a compositeness of application that mere substantive and processual law cannot have. The *Achara* rules link up law with society and ethics. The Prâyaschitta rules link up law with inner purifications and controls. The King was a source of law in cases of new situations and new developments of commerce, industry and administration. Custom was a source of law and this enabled Hindu law to have flexibility and elasticity consistently with general obedience to an ethical code. The greatest names in the region of law are Manu and Yâjnavalkya. Dr. Robertson says well about Manu: "With respect to the number and variety of points the Hindu Code considers it will bear a comparison with the celebrat-

ed Digest of Justinian, or with the systems of Jurisprudence in nations most highly civilised. The articles of which the Hindu Code is composed are arranged in natural and luminous order. They are numerous and comprehensive, and investigated with that minute attention and discernment which are natural to a people distinguished for acuteness and subtlety of understanding, who have long been accustomed to the accuracy of judicial proceedings, and acquainted with all the refinements of legal practice. The decisions concerning every point are founded upon the great and immutable, principles of justice, which the human mind acknowledges and respects in every age and in all parts of the earth. Whoever examines the whole work cannot entertain a doubt of its containing the jurisprudence of an enlightened and commercial people. Whoever looks into any particular title will be surprised with a minuteness of detail and nicety of distinction which, in many instances, seem to go beyond the attention of European Legislation; and it is remarkable that some of the regulations which indicate the greatest degree of refinement were established in periods of the most remote antiquity".

Industrial and commercial advancement and

material prosperity are certainly indications as well as effects of national strength and sound political organisation. Judged by this test Hindu India occupied a great and unique place in the scale of nations. Both Sanskrit and Tamil classical works contain frequent and unmistakable references to foreign trade with distant lands. A study of the description in the Tamil classics of the seaport town of Kaviripoompatnam would dispel all cavilling doubt on this point. In Sakuntala we learn that a merchant who had extensive commercial enterprises was lost at sea and left a magnificent fortune. Manu refers to bottomry. Thus going back from recent times up to the remotest ages we have clear evidences of commercial enterprise and greatness. The trade intercourse between the Phoenicians and Hindus is a well-attested fact. The word *Dînara* (Dinarius) occurs in Sanskrit literature. I may cite here testimony from two independent quarters to confirm these statements. It is stated in Tod's Western India: "We are assured on undisputed authority that the Romans remitted annually to India a sum equivalent to £4,000,000 to pay for their investments, and that in the reign of Ptolemies 125 sails of Indian shipping were at one time

lying in the ports whence Egypt, Syria, and Rome itself were supplied with the products of India". It is stated in Volume XI of the Encyclopaedia Britannica: "It (India) exploited its most valuable produce, its diamonds, its aromatics, its silks, and its costly manufactures. The country, which abounded in those expensive luxuries, was naturally reputed to be the seat of immense riches, and every romantic tale of its felicity and glory was readily believed. In the Middle Ages, an extensive commerce with India was still maintained through the ports of Egypt and the Red Sea; and its precious produce, imported into Europe by the merchants of Venice, confirms the popular opinion of its high refinement and its vast wealth". The Koh-i-noor still proclaims by the silent eloquence of its coruscating splendour the material greatness of Golden India.

Hindu colonisation is an eloquent commentary on Hindu political effectiveness and capacity. Even to-day in Java and Bali we have living and imperishable monuments of Hindu colonial vigour. We need not speculate as to whether Ararat was not Aryavarta, whether the Nile was not derived from Nila (blue) and whether the word "Heracleians is derived"

from "Harikula' (the tribe of Sri Kri-shna). There is no doubt that Aryan colonisation penetrated at least as far as Persia and China, if not farther. The Iranian band is well known to have been a band of Aryan dissenters. The Burmese call their Code "Dharma Sath" or Sastra. It is one among the many commentaries on Manu. Manu in Chapter X, Verses 43 and 44 says that Dravidas, Kambhojas, Yavanas, Sakas, Chinese, and others were Kshatriyas who had ceased to have touch with Hindu ritual and Brahminical lore and instruction. The Mahabharata states the same fact in the Anucâsana Parva, Verses 2103, 2104, 2158, and 2159 and Santhi Parva, Chapter LXV. The peculiarity of Hindu colonisation was that its advance did not mean extermination or extirpation. Nor did it mean an abandonment of the home culture. The social and religious framework was carried by the colonising bands and the seeds of culture thus scattered by them out of the abundance of the harvest at home fructified in the remotest corners and became the parents of other civilisations all over the earth. But in this process of extension the purity and perfection of Hindu culture could not be maintained as well abroad as at home. India, the true home of the Aryan race, has

always been and is and will for ever be, the true home of Hindu culture.

Proceeding to consider the achievements of Hindu Science, is it not clear that Hindu India had achieved signal success in the realm of science? It had a high rank in mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, medicine, surgery etc. Centuries before Galileo was born Hindu astronomers declared the truth about the cause of eclipses. The Hindus gave to the world the decimal cyphers and the numerical figures. Algebra, though it has an Arab name, had a Hindu parentage. The *Lilavathi* is a remarkable work in every way. The *Surya Sidhanta* is based on a rational system of trigonometry. Professor Monier Williams says: "To the Hindus is due the invention of Algebra and Geometry and their application to Astronomy". Two stanzas in 'Aryabhattiyam' which show the Hindu astronomical greatness may be given here by way of illustration.

Vrithabhapanjaramadhyè Kakshayâparivesh-
titiah Khamadhyagathah !
Mrijjalasikhivâyumayô Bhoogôlassarvatho-
[vrithah !!

(The earth, situated in the middle of the cosmic sphere and composed of the five elements, is spherical in its shape).

Bhapanjarah sthirô Bhoorevavrityavritha
.[Pratidaivasikow !
Udayasthamayow Sampadayathe Grîha
[nakstatramam !!

(The starry vault is fixed. The earth moves round and round upon its axis and causes the rising and the setting of the planets and the stars). Hindu medicine was equally great. Professor Wilson says: "The ancient Hindus attained as thorough a proficiency in medicine and surgery as any people whose acquisitions are recorded". Sir P. C. Ray's History of Hindu Chemistry shows us well the high proficiency of the Hindus in chemical science. It is not possible to discuss this question of Hindu scientific greatness in any great detail here but even a casual and careless study of Hindu science and its influence on science elsewhere in the world will make us realise the uniqueness of the Hindu scientific intellect, method, and achievement, and will dower us with a new and vibrant confidence in the possibility of swift and sure scientific progress in India now and hereafter. If historical literature be taken as a test of the vitality of racial self-consciousness, even then Hindu India is not behind, though here it could not compete with the West. The materials for

the writing of a great vital Indian history are lying all about us. The vast size of the land prevented till now a synthetic presentation of its historical evolution and its processional march through the resounding ages. Further, we do not know how much of her historical literature has been lost. Tod says in his introduction to his *Rajasthan*: "If we consider the political changes and convulsions which have happened in Hindustan since Mahmud's invasion, and the intolerant bigotry of many of his successors, we shall be able to account for the paucity of its national works on history, without being driven to the improbable conclusion that the Hindus were ignorant of an art which was cultivated in other countries from among the earliest ages. Is it to be imagined that a nation so highly civilised as the Hindus, amongst whom the exact sciences flourished in perfection, by whom the fine arts, architecture, sculpture, poetry and music were not only cultivated, but taught and defined by the nicest and most elaborate rules, were totally unacquainted with the simple art of recording the events of their history, the characters of their princes, and the acts of their reigns"?

That the Hindus were supreme in literature

and art is a fact admitted and proclaimed by universal testimony. I shall describe in a later chapter the *differentia* of Hindu literary culture. Literature and art are not mere ornamentation and embellishment but a self-revelation of the racial consciousness in the realm of ideal beauty. Mrs. Manning has declared that "the Hindu had the widest range of mind of which man is capable". The art of writing was invented in India and is of unrealisable antiquity. The word *Lipi* appears even in Panini. The science of grammar of which the supreme exponent is Panini was perfected in a manner which has won universal admiration. Professor Weber says: "We pass at once into the magnificent edifice which bears the name of Panini as its architect, and which justly commands the wonder and admiration of every one who enters, and which, by the very fact of its sufficing for all the phenomena which language presents, bespeaks at once the marvellous ingenuity of its inventor and his profound penetration of the entire material of the language." Sir W. Hunter calls it as "one of the most splendid achievements of human invention and industry." Sir Monier Williams says: "No other country can produce any grammatical system at all com-

parable to it, either for originality of plan or analytical subtlety". The greatness of Sanskrit epic and lyric and didactic poetry is of a unique type. Its power of charming and captivating us into perfection of ethical life and perfection of emotional pleasure and spiritual bliss can be realised by even a casual student of its masterpieces. The great *epics* and the later Kavyas, the great dramas of Hindu India, the *Mêgha Sandesa, Ritusamhara, Gita Govinda* and other great masterpieces of lyric poetry, the later mellifluous hymns and lyrics and songs of devotion in the divine sanskrit and the beautiful vernaculars, the quintessential wisdom contained in Panchatantra, Hitopadesa, and Bhartrihari's Satakas, and the splendours of devotional poetry contained in the Puranas and above all in that Koh-i-noor of devotional works Srimad Bhagawata form the greatest of the world's treasuries of literary beauty, the most powerful of all agencies to lead the human spirit with the soft caressing touch of grace and with the musical sweet-toned call of love to the very steps of the Throne of Grace.

Hindu art was and is marvellous in its beauty and its variety. The splendid temples found all over India, the marvels of her sculpture,

and the splendours of the few remaining paintings have attracted and commanded the passionate adorations of all beauty-loving hearts. Hindu architecture combines permanence and beauty in a manner unknown elsewhere. It is full of wonderful embellishment, for the Hindu genius crams every nook and crevice with beauty. It is full of a profusion of representations of Indian flora and fauna. The The Ellora temples, the Mahabalipbram Raths, the pillared architecture and the gopurams of the great shrines of Southern India, and the palace of Tirumal Naik at Madura, speak for themselves. The Ajanta paintings are of great and striking beauty. Indeed the power and skill and delicacy of Hindu fingers have been remarkable. Mr. James Mill says: "The delicate frame of the Hindu is accompanied with an acuteness of external sense, particularly of touch, which is altogether unrivalled, and the flexibility of his fingers is equally remarkable". Their power was displayed in those marvels of cotton and silk weaving which have been admired for their delicacy and beauty. Equally remarkable was the work of the Hindus in the decorative arts. Their metal work and jewellery has always shewed fine fancy and high finish and a keen sense of beauty. The bro-

cades and carpets of India are still admired throughout the world. The splendours of nature inspired the splendours of the decorative arts in India.

What shall we say of Hindu music-so refined, so highly evolved, and so spiritual? It is a living art even to-day and has been perfected in a manner that baffles description. It is not a mere chance that the two divine images which fascinate Hindu heart are Sri Krishna with his flute divine and Sri Nataraja with his dance of ecstacy. Art in India is spiritual and is only the gate of Beauty through which man goes in spirit unto God.

As for Hindu philosophy and religion, winged words of divine power would be needed to express the world's indebtedness to them. Schlegel exclaims: "Even the loftiest philosophy of the European-the idealism of reason as it is set forth by the Greek philosophers—appears in comparison with the abundant light and vigour of oriental idealism like a feeble Promethean spark in the full flood of heavenly glory, faltering and feeble and ever ready to be extinguished". Schopenhauer declares: "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my

death". Huxley speaks of "Indian sages to whom evolution was a familiar notion before Paul of Tarsus was born". The Shad Darsanas, the three great schools of Vedantic thought, and the living philosophical power of to-day speak for themselves and attest the greatness of Hindu India in religion and philosophy. I shall deal later on with the differentia of Hindu religion and philosophy.

We must never forget the vital life-centre of Hindu culture lay in its spiritual vision. This vision was the light celestial which showed the true proportions of life. The joys of life were realised more intensely and purely here than elsewhere because they were related to the joys of superlife. Real democracy was realised in village autonomy because of the vision of the All in each. Beauty was not only in the fine arts but also in the industrial arts because of the vision of the beauty of the Noumenon. It was the ambrosial overflow of Ideal Beauty and Love and Bliss that enriched our spacious fields of domestic, social, political and economic, literary and artistic life. Life in its wholeness was realised as a self-utterance by life divine. Beauty is not a mere compound of lines and tints; it is a shining forth of the spirit through the veils of matter. If it is a

compound at all, it is a compound of *Santhi* (peace) and *Ananda* (bliss). Art is a self-liberation of the Self by itself. It is the reconciliation of the contradictions and sorrows and discords of life in the light of a deeper unity and an intenser bliss and a heavenlier harmony. It is not an amusement but a consecration, not a self-indulgence but self-renunciation in a passion of love. In the realm of drama we see this Hindu note in *excelsis*. The motif of the drama is not blind fate in relentless operation nor the blind clash of will with will or will with environment or the evolution of harmony out of the discords of life by a benevolent and overruling Providence but the operation of the laws of *Karma* under the guidance of a God of Love. In every department of life there was the same visualisation and realisation of the fundamental spiritual ideals of India. I shall describe and demonstrate these aspects in some detail later on.

Thus the whole life of India centres in the man of renunciation and spiritual life and his life centres in God. Vasishta was the main-spring of the greatest and holiest of all Empires on the Earth. Life was organised on the basis of each for all and all for God. Capitalism was impossible because there was

no possible monopoly of pleasures which capital alone could buy. Whatever accumulation of wealth naturally took place was regarded as a trust, and affluence vied with affluence not in building skyscrapers or owning yachts or travelling in special trains and saloons but in feeding the poor and building *chatrams* and temples and digging tanks and wells and thus sharing the bounties of Providence with the poor. What was aimed at was not perfection of machinery but perfection of life. Science was subordinated to Superscience. Man did not look down on the world but looked up to God. India aimed at the simplification of life, and not at the complication of life. She has been synthetic, imaginative and spiritual in her outlook. Her ideals are *Santhi, Ahimsa, Prema* and *Ananda*. She aims at purity rather than power, and power attends upon her as it is the shadow of purity and cannot subsist apart from the substance. She aims at God rather gold and gold is at her feet because it is the gift to God to goodness.

It is not necessary to multiply such instances. I have said enough to show the vital centres of Hindu culture and refinement. The ideal of self-realisation through self-renunciation had, and will ever have, a subtle, sweet and ir-

resistible fascination for the Hindu mind and heart. Hindu "mildness", to use a phrase flung at us in opprobrium, is the strong self-restraint of a potentate of the spirit, the mighty renunciation of a Prince Sidharta or a Sri Ramachandra who could protect himself but loves to serve others. It shrank from waste of life and had an abiding sense of the sanctity of life. It had potent powers of self-protection but refrained from sacrifice of life for purposes of exploitation. Its conception of progress was one of increasing *Sâttwic* temperament in personal, social, national and international life. If modern India and the modern world organise life on this basis, then and then only the increasing divinisation of human life which was begun by ancient India can be attained, so that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Thus Ancient India was as great in the realm of practical life as in the realm of religion and philosophy. In science and medicine, in arts and handicrafts, in manufactures and commerce, and in maritime activity she had a brilliant record of achievement. Such an efflorescence was due not to individual genius alone but to national self-realisation. We can therefore rightly expect a

radiant consciousness of the greatness of the motherland, a deep and vivid and passionate sense of her unity and her glory, a burning patriotism alive in life and literature from ancient times. Our expectation is found on investigation to be amply justified by facts and events.

The Veda is full of passionate descriptions of the beauty and blessedness of our holy land. Manu Smrithi and other Smrithis, Vishnupurana, Bhagavatha and later epic poetry strike the same triumphant and passionate note. The Hindu institution of pilgrimage has materialised in outer life the inner realisations of literature and religion. The real centres of life in our land have always been the temple cities. The Himalayas, Benares, Prayag, Dwaraka, Brindavana, Puri, Kanchi, Srirangam, Madura and Rameswara—to mention only a few places of pilgrimage—what a vision of outer and inner purity and unity is called up beore our mind by these blessed names! By one sweep of thought in its purest moments of religious feeling, the whole country is taken into the mental view and realised as one and as holy and blessed beyond measure.

Politically and economically also, the vision of a united India was reached in India in

early times. The ideal of an all-India Empire was well-known. The Arthasastra and the Niti sastra showed how the immense natural resources of the land could be utilised by wholesome political life and economic life to bring happiness and power to the land in abundance. The social and political institutions all over India were based on the principle of unity in variety and enabled the people to have a vision of the cultural life as a whole and combine central strength and elasticity of parts.

Can any one deny after realising all this that India has been a home of progress? If so, he is irredeemable. Let me conclude this chapter with what has fallen from the lips of so prejudiced an observer as Abbe Dubois himself: "India is the world's cradle; thence it is that that common mother, in sending forth her children even to the utmost west, has bequeathed to us the legacy of her language, her laws, her morals, her literature, and her religion. Manu inspired Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek and Roman legislation and his spirit permeates the whole economy of our European laws".

CHAPTER III.

THE HISTORY OF HINDU CULTURE

THE History of Hindu Culture is a great chapter in the history of the world. It has as yet been imperfectly written and is marred by misrepresentations and conscious or unconscious fictions. The theory of an Aryan immigration *into* India is one of the old fictions of western scholarship; and even now, and even in the case of Indian authors, the weight of this dead theory seems to be such as no argument can shake or remove. I have elsewhere tried to show the untruth of this theory and to prove that India was the true and ancient and only home of the Aryans. There is not one word in the Hindu scriptures to justify the view that the Aryans came into India from some other region of the earth or from some other planet. The phenomena referred to in Mr. Tilak's *Arctic Home in the Vedas* refer to what were observed by a Hindu colony from Aryavartha and do not show that the Aryan *home* was near the North Pole. The attempt to make out that the Hindus were immigrants into this land has no real

arguments to support it to any extent. Swami Vivekananda in his own direct and forceful way once said: "Our archaeologist dreams of India being full of dark-eyed aborigines, and the bright-eyed Aryans came from the Lord knows where. According to some, they came from Central Tibet, others will have it that they came from Central Asia. There are patriotic Englishmen who think that the Aryans were all red-haired. Others, according to their idea, think that they were all black-haired. If the writer happens to be a black-haired man, the Aryans were all black. Of late there was an attempt made to prove that the Aryans lived on the Swiss lakes. I should not be sorry if they had all been drowned there, theory and all. Some say that they lived at the North Pole. Lord bless the Aryans and their habitations! As for the truth of these theories, there is not one word in our scriptures, not one, to prove that the Aryans ever came from anywhere outside of India, and in ancient India was included Afghanistan. There it ends".

Equally untenable and fallacious is the theory of a distinct Dravidian race. I have exposed this fallacy also elsewhere and cannot go into the question in any detail here. The name

Drâvida is the name, not of a race, but of a portion of India. You may as well talk of Kentians and Yorkians and Northumbrians. Chera, Chola and Pandya Kingdoms are referred to in the Puranas as three among the well-known fifty six Aryan kingdoms. Agastya, the patron-saint of Tamil literature, is an Aryan saint of undoubted and even exceptional Aryanness. Some learned references are frequently made by scholars and savants to Nagas and Dasyus, and some daring speculators even refer to the imaginary continent of Atlantis and the immigration of the Dravidian race from there to India. When imagination begins to run riot, there is no holding it back. The *Dasyus* were only those Aryans who had fallen from Dharma. Manu says in Chapter V verse 45 that those who are born of the four Varnas without the necessary vedic *kriya* or *samskara* must be deemed to be Dasyas. Some scholars even state that Ravana was a Dravidian chief. But unfortunately they do not know that he was speaking Sanskrit and that the Vedas were studied in Rakshasa homes ! Swami Vivekananda says well: " There is a theory that there was a race of mankind in Southern India called Dravidians, entirely differing from another race in

Northern India called the Aryans, and that the Southern India Brahmanas are the only Aryans that came from the North, the other men of Southern India belong to an entirely different caste and race to those of Southern India Brahmanas. Now I beg your pardon, Mr. Philologist, this is entirely unfounded . . . . . . Do not believe in such silly things . . . . . The whole of India is Aryan, nothing else".

In regard to the history of Hindu Culture, there are certain preliminary obsessions to vanquish and subdue. The first requisite is a knowledge of the Hindu conception of scripture. To the Hindus it is the eternal word which is inseparable from the eternal idea. It is the world-maker because the universe is only projected divine thought. It is timeless; it is perfect; and it is not a human composition. The fact that others dub it in another way is no ground for our abandoning a position fortified by centuries of religious thought. Western scholars assure us that it contains hymns addressed to mere personifications of the powers of nature. Personification indeed! My dear Mr. Scholar, you yourself are then a mere personification and not a person. We hold that the ultimate verity

praised by the hymns is the Divine Person and that the immediate verity hymned is the Lord in one of His infinite manifestations in charge of one of His infinite functions in relation to nature and to man. The Rig Veda itself declares: *Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanthi* (He is one; the sages describe Him in various ways). In another place it declares that He is Brahman, He is Siva, He is Indra, He is the supreme and He is the self-regnant God. The Hindus have always believed and proved the Sruthi to be revelation, revealed by God and handed down in an unbroken succession of sense and sound, and no one can understand or appreciate the true significance of Hindu scripture who does not take into consideration this primary and most important fact.

A second need is the banishment of the idea that Veda contains the babblings of an infant humanity. To the Hindus Veda is revelation. In fact it contains the seed of all the later philosophies and religions propounded and preached in India. The later efflorescence of the Hindu mind in philosophy was only on the stem of Upanishadic intuition and spiritual experience. Even the mighty mind of Sankara takes its stand on revelation rather

than on reason, giving congruent reason *(anukûla tarka)* a secondary place in the investigation of Truth. The modern Hindu students and scholars and writers are apt to say in an uncritical way that the Vedas are the outpourings of Aryan savages. We believe that they are "the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws" ever-existent but visioned and discovered and revealed by men of true revelatory power called *Rishis.*

The region between Saraswathi and Drishadwathi, as described in Manu Chapter II, verse 17, seems to have been the original home of the Aryans. From there the Hindu race spread east and south and west. As stated already a colony went towards the North Pole. A branch of Aryan dissidents went to Iran and became the followers of Zoroaster. The Hindu colonisers of Southern India did not consist of Brahmins alone but of all the four castes. The Ramayana itself speaks of the Chola and Pandya kingdoms. It seems to me that the earliest settlements were along the coast and the central portions of the Dekkan were full of forests into which Hindu civilisation permeated by slow degrees.

It is not possible to describe here the details of the development of Hindu culture through

the hastening centuries. The Sutras and the Dharma sastras were perfected. Great systems of science and philosophy were projected and brought into existence. The consolidation of Hindu states went on continuously. Everywhere there was an unbroken record of continuous growth and expansion of Hindu Culture.

The *Ramayana* is the supreme epic of the Aryan genius and of the self-expansion of the Aryan race. The whole land was made sacred beyond description by the touch of Sri Rama's holy feet and the look of Sri Sita Devi's lotus eyes. The description of Ayodhya in the epic shows how might and magnificence walked hand in hand in the remotest ages in India. The crude idea of modern western scholarship slavishly accepted and repeated by some Indian writers that the vedic age was one of worship of powers of nature whereas the epic age was an age of caste and ritualism is a travesty of the truth. The eternal ideals revealed in the Veda were affirmed and realised by the epic heroes and proclaimed in the epics themselves. There was not one idea or practice which flourished in the epic age and which had not its roots in the Veda. A beautiful Sanskrit stanza says that when the Lord of

the Veda was born as Sri Rama, the Veda took form as Ramayana. The Ramayana shows us Hindu culture at its zenith in respect of political power and moral rectitude. We cannot regard it as illustrative of the Aryanisation of South India. Aryan kingdoms such as Chola and Pandya Kingdoms existed even before Rama went to conquer Lanka. Agastya had already gone to the South from Northern India. The Rakshasas who inhabited Lanka are described in the epic as students of the Veda and speakers of Sanskrit, though devoid of truth or compassion or purity. The Ramayana shows us the reaffirmation and re-expansion of the purer Aryan faith and life once again from their vital centre throughout the holy land.

If the Ramayana shows us the Hindu Culture in one of its culminations of magnificent self-realisation, the Mahabharata shows us the setting of the sun of Hindu power in a sea of blood. The Kshatriyas had again and again departed from the ancient traditions of righteous rule. Parasurama's expeditions against them were punitive as well as remedial measures. During the Mahabharata epoch India's chivalry was ranged in rival camps for and against righteousness, and on the holy

plain of Kurukshetra there was not only a fearful extinction of life but a terrible destruction of the bulwarks of Aryan culture. Dharma had declined so low that Sri Krishna had to incarnate and to weed out the unrighteous elements though at the risk of loss of national strength by the slaughter of almost the entire Kshatriya section of the community. The seed of purity had to be preserved from contamination though at the terrible cost of the temporary crippling of national power and prosperity.

Though for some centuries afterwards India did not recover from the shock of carnage at Kurukshetra, new consolidations of culture and power began to spring up in the land. Magadha was ruled over by twenty-eight Kings from the time of the Mahabharata up to the seventh century B. C. In the seventh century B. C. Sisunaga founded a new dynasty. Bimbisara and Ajâtasatru were the greatest sovereigns of that line. Its rule came to an end about 370 B.C. The Nanda dynasty then ruled for fifty or sixty years. The last Nanda was overthrown by Chandragupta who laid the foundation of one of the first famous and powerful empires in the history of India.

Budhism arose in the midst of this development more as a protest against certain aspects of Hinduism than as a cult of revolutionary change. It had a great origin and a great history in India and contributed some elements to Hindu culture. But it eventually failed. Budhism failed in India because it broke off from the Vedic tradition and Vedic authority, because it did not emphasise the religious aspect, because it did not accept Iswara, and because it had not the synthetic manysidedness of Hinduism. But it gave to Hindu culture an added intensity of ethical and monastic life and an intimate sense of the essential brotherhood of man. These truths were well known already but a new emphasis was placed on them by Budhism. The great figure in Budhistic imperialism is the noble and famous emperor missionary and saint Asoka.

The history of the later development of Hindu Culture is a march from triumph to triumph, from consolidation to consolidation. The Maghada Empire and other and later empires show that the idea of peninsular sovereignty, or rather suzerainty, was well known. The reigns of Chandragupta, Vikramaditya and Bhojas were of unexampled power, progress, and magnificence. The progress

of literature and art was rapid and wonderful. In every respect there was every prospect of the perfect consolidation and self-realisation of Hindu Culture.

It was during this period that there arose the mighty Empire of Vikramaditya. During his reign we see not only remarkable political power, social efficiency and material prosperity, but also a wonderful record of literary achievement, scientific progress and philosophic and religious development. Tradition assigns to his court the supreme poet of India—Kalidasa—as one of the 'nine gems' of that Court. It is not possible to go here into a discussion of Kalidasa's date. But we must not forget that in the *Bharatavakyam* in his drama *Malavikagnimitra* he describes Agnimitra as reigning at that time. Agnimitra belonged to the Sunga dynasty and reigned in the 2nd century B. C. In Kalidasa we find a wonderful efflorescence of Hindu culture. In the *Raghuvamsa* he describes the epic of the decline and fall of a previous golden age, probably as a warning and as an advice. The arts of peace and of war, as described in his work, show what great heights were attained by the Hindu culture in his age. His ideals of society and sovereignty, of secular and spiritual life, of arts

and of sciences are among the highest and noblest known to man.

That this great era of revival of Hindu culture had wonderful possibilities of development becomes more and more clear and undeniable, the more we study the history of the reassertion of Hindu culture subsequent to Budhism. It was that impulse that, like a resistless tide, bore the race to new achievements in the realms of political consolidation and supremacy in literature, art, philosophy and religion. Soon after the Mahabharata, the great Puranas settled once for all the composite framework of Hindu social and spiritual life. Sri Sankaracharya not only overthrew Budhism, but by his immortal Bhashyas and devotional poems reseated Hindu religious culture on its ancient throne and also won for it the homage of the world. It was the potency of Hindu cultural reassertion that, despite the later dissensions within and incursions from without, gave us not only the later great Acharyas of the South—Sri Ramanujacharya and Sri Madhwacharya—and the great saints of Maharashtra, Bengal and Northern India, but also the various Hindu political re-constructions, despite the innumerable interruptions of the normal evolution of Hindu culture,

subsequent to-its triumphant self-assertion and its conquest over Budhism.

But before the idea of complete consolidation and peninsular suzerainty was worked out, invasion followed invasion. The mutual jealousies of the Rajput and other states led to the triumph of Islam. Islam brought to Hindu culture in its own way a heightened self-consciousness and unity and a deeper sense of brotherhood. The great Islamic sway resulted also in a sense of the unity of Hindus and Mahomedans, despite earlier incompatibilities. Then followed a reassertion of Hindu imperialism by the Rajputs, the Mahrattas, and the Vijayanagar kings. Every one of these great periods was an era of clear political vision and construction, of social harmony and efficiency, of literary and artistic achievement, and philosophic and religious development. But none of them had enough time and favourable environment to perfect itself. Eventually there came in the European races. After a fight among these the British were left masters of the field to perfect the consolidation of India on modern lines and to bring India into line with the modern ideals of science and democracy.

This is the first time in her history when India is confronted by a civilisation that has the un-

exampled glitter of material prosperity, that has reason as its watchword, and that has its own great solutions of the problems of life. Budhism was but a rebellious child, and Islam was no doubt a power but a power that felt the sway of Hindu culture and mingled with the life of the people without altering it in any effective way. Hindu culture can no longer rely upon its passive power to meet the new age and the new civilisation. Hindu culture must now enter on its active and dynamic stage and produce new creations of social love and art and religion to make us feel equal to the new age in every respect. This dynamic power must no doubt come by responding to the stimulus of modern thought and under the pressure of modern needs, but it must come through self-augmentation of power from within and not by imitations or borrowings from without. We must not move from our centre of gravity. Our daily life, our marital ideals, our religious realisations, our literature and art, must not be departed from. They are the centre; the heart-point; the laboratory of our vitality. You may accept the locomotive from the West but why should you change your clothes; you may use the telegraph and the telephone but

why should you change your language except for purposes of administration and to the extent necessary for intercommunication between the administrators and the people; you may have the gramophone and the cinema but why should they displace our music and our stage? They must come as *additions*, nay, as Indianised additions; they should never come as substitutions. Science may and must come but why should philosophy go? Wealth may and must come but why should our religious rapture go? The press has come but why should the *Pauranika* go? The club has come but why should our feet turn away from the temples? The legislative council has come but why should village panchayats disappear? The equality of vote has come but why should the inequality of experience which leads to reverence for experience depart? The political parties have come and are coming but why should *bhajana* parties become conspicuous by their absence? Stumping orators may stump the country from end to end but why should the Harikathakas hide or bow their heads in shame and dwindle in numbers and in influence? Make money by all means but why should you cease to see God in the heart and in the world?

That is the real national good which not only increases the powers of the national mind but intensifies it in its own immemorial distinctiveness. Prove everything and hold fast to yourself. Be a scientist but be a *yogin* as well. Be a captain of industry but be a philosopher as well. Be a minister but be a saint as well. Did we not have these rich and rare combinations before? Why should they be on the decrease now?

To take an almost trivial example, the Mahomedan rejoices in a full beard and the European fronts the sun with a smooth-shaven skin. The Hindu has had an intermediate ideal. What instinct prompts the neo-Hindu to give it up? The Mahomedan is proud of the purdah; the European is proud of feminine freedom. The Hindu has had an intermediate ideal here also. What makes him seek to forsake it to-day for the western ideal? Did he take to universal beard-growing or purdah during the Moghul domination? What has come over him newly now? Similarly in the matter of dress and social amenities he must stick to his own and be proud of them. He must maintian his spiritual lead and not substitute for it a new spirituous lead. We have in fact come now to a new chapter in the

history of Hindu Culture and the world is waiting to see whether it will be written by us ill or well.

CHAPTER IV

THE DIFFERENTIA OF HINDU CULTURE

PROFESSOR Lowes Dickinson said once that Indian Civilisation is so unique that the contrast is not so much between East and West as between India and the rest of the world. Sir Lepel Griffin stated that, judged by any fair standard, the people of India were morally higher than the peoples of the West. These two sentences give us a very important truth which the modern aspirants after a fictitious and outer unity as distinguished from an inner, self-respecting, mutually-reverent, and organic unity either do not observe, ignore, forget or conceal. The future towards which the present is now unconsciously working with frequent and unhappy interruptions but towards which it ought to work steadily and without any interruption is not a dead, mechanical, colourless unity but a living, vital, organic glowing harmony. It is no doubt true that science is fast becoming the common possession of all; that the political organisation of communities all over the world is tending

towards democracy; and that commerce is linking up the ends of the earth. But it is equally true that the increasing leisure consequent on decreasing hatred and decreasing toil will be applied differently and with different intensiveness and on different objects and with different results by different communities all over the world. He who expects from a similarity of outer environment a sameness or even similarity of inner endowment and achievement is indeed a man extraordinarily blind. The past does not indicate such a goal; the present is not working towards it; and the future does not forecast it. Nor is such a goal desirable in itself, of any intrinsic value or interest, or one in consonance with the visible will of God.

It is the function of culture to lift life to noble uses, to something higher than itself, to lift it to some level higher than animal satisfaction and race reproduction. It disciplines him through love of truth and beauty and goodness to a realisation of his essential nature as separate from mere physical being. Grecian culture perfected intellectual reason and sense of beautiful form; Roman culture perfected law and order and political cohesion on the basis of law; modern European culture is perfecting scientific reason and democracy.

Indian culture stressed the realisation of the infinite by self-dedicated devotion rising on the wings of discipline and dispassion to the lotus feet of God.

We need not enter here upon the debateable and debated ground of the superiority and inferiority of cultures. As regards the mere outer manifestations in art and literature and social usages and political institutions there have been, are, and will ever be diverseness in the world; and the children of each culture will claim for it superiority over all the other cultures in the world. Each child hugs its own doll and men are but children of a larger growth. We must however despise the spiritless child which dislikes its own doll and casts evil glances at another's doll but is afraid to demand it, the petulant child that breaks its doll, and the evil-hearted child that must anyhow break another's doll. The real test of a great culture is not in the outer decorations of life but in its leading its followers nearer to the spiritualisation of life. It matters not by what road it leads them there; but it certainly matters whether it leads them there or not.

Every national culture has got its own harmony of body, mind, and soul. It is an expression of the national admirations and

adorations, of the national preferences and perfections. But culture is not a mere idea, a mere summation. It is a pervasive power, a living principle, an ever-active and ever-moulding energy. The expressive phrase *Bhârata Sakthi,* which we owe to Sir John Woodroffe, is not a mere phrase but a fact. To us India is a Devi, a goddess, who is the animating principle of our being. She is our *Karma Bhumi*, our *Bhoga Bhumi*, our *Punya Bhumi*, our eternal treasure, our eternal guide unto God's lotus feet, our truest friend, our God-given Guru whose very touch will dispel ignorance and give us the bliss ofo God-love and God-realisation.

Each culture has therefore its affirmations, its emphasis, its genius. It cannot be a colourless replica of another culture. If it attempts to be so, it will only stultify itself. Though now the cultural influence of Europe is great, each great indigenous culture, if it is resolved and destined to live, will soon reassert itself. The material splendours of western culture may dazzle it for a time; the inexorable demands of the new age may even compel it to make some new adjustments; but it will fight every inch and eventually preserve a vast region of inner possessions unapproached and unsubdued. It

will return with a new love to its language and its literature, its philosophy and its religion, and its ideals of personal and social life and stand four-square against the shocks of circumstance.

The most powerful impersonations of a culture will be in those who express its real secret with success and power. Its most vivid and forceful and impressive types will be in the realms dearest to its heart. The fact that in India the greatest personalities whose birthdays are celeberated even to-day were spiritual leaders is itself an event of unique significance. Though Europe may prize the *râjasic* will, India prizes the *sattwic* will which is powerful yet self-controlled, strong to defend and unwilling to strike, more full of vision than of passion, looking more to God than to man. India prizes asceticism not because it is an effacement of the will but because it is a discipline of the will for the sake of the highest realisation and bliss. India's passion for the impersonal does not mean the negation of personality but the extension, fulfilment, and self-transcendence of perfected personality. It is the inability to comprehend the specialities of India's genius that has been responsible for the cruel misunderstanding of her aims and

her ideals. It is by studying lovingly and intimately the lives and utterances of those in whom those specialities have found radiant blossoming and perfect and ripe fruitage that we can learn to understand her mission and her call. Such a study should not be the mere study of idle senility or even of active maturity. It must be the most important study of youth so that the national mind may be immersed in the study of national ideals in and from its most impressionable period. Cultures may be loved and expounded by age, and may be defended and safeguarded by maturity; but they are preserved as a power and as an influence only by the youth of the nation.

Every great culture in the world has got its interpretation of life, its vital forms of its ideal, and its realisation of the ideal in life. These aspects are its religious side, its artistic side, and its social side. The western culture presents nature as a flowering into man; Indian culture presents God as manifesting Himself in nature and in man. The western culture represents nature and man in art; Indian culture represents in art the supernatural and the divine. The western culture sets up utilitarian standards in social life and seeks the fulfilment of economic and political development through

the stress of competition; Indian culture sets up spiritual standards in social life and seeks the fulfilment of the *Purusharthas* by non-competitive and organised and harmonious co-ordination.

Each, in fact, is the complement of the other. The degradation of the one is in the limiting of the inner vision to the earth, the revelling in natural and human beauty as the only summations of loveliness, and the worship of mere machinery. The degradation of the other is in vague abstraction, the forgetting of manifest Godhead in the search after the unmanifested Beauty, and mere quietism. The danger of the one is undignified rest in intermediate satisfactions. The danger of the other is non-attainment of distant satisfactions. The fulfilment of the one is in a clear rationality, a clear vision of earthly beauty, and a clarity of earthly enjoyment. The fulfilment of the other is in spiritual realisation, a vision of heavenly enjoyment, and a clarity of spiritual joy. The blessedness of the one is in the life here; the blessedness of the other is in the super life. Each has its own keynote, its master-idea, its central impulse, its visioning of the totality of life. Each has its own conception of the highest type of manhood and of self-realisation.

The modern European mind has deified reason as the final arbiter of things. It wants reason to purify religion. But the Hindu mind deified spiritual realisation as the ultimate revealer of things. It wants religion to purify reason. The modern European mind has as its goal universal education, universal suffrage, and universal enjoyment. The Hindu mind has had as its goal universal peace, universal love,and universal bliss (the eternal bliss of God-love and God-realisation and not the fleeting bliss of terrestrial enjoyment). To the modern European mind philosophy is a thing apart from life, a mere synthesis of knowledge. To the Hindu mind it is of the stuff and essence of life and has always had practical daily consequences on life and thought. Alexander, Caeser and Napoleon are the acmes of practical life there; Janaka, Rama and Yudhishtra are the acmes of practical life here. The west begins with the body and gropes towards the spirit; India begins with the spirit and visions the place of the outer things in a comprehensive scheme of life. To the west the test of values is outside; to India the test of values is inside.

This is not mere antithetical statement born of love of rhetoric but is the necessary expres-

sion of a felt divergence of aim and endeavour, of aspiration and achievement. Mutual respect does not mean self-suppression in a slavish mood of dependence. We are grateful to the West for many things! We are full of thankfulness for the new era of peace and the coming consolidations of social and political life. But we must know ourselves, our distintictiveness, our *swabhâva,* and be glad of it and proud of it. We must front the new morning not only with new powers of wise assimilation but with self-knowledge ard self-reverence and self-control which alone can lead life to sovereign power.

Generally speaking, in Europe the cults of rationalism and enjoyment have always been in the ascendant and became sometimes degraded into the denials of agnosticism and the petty affirmations of secularism. In India the cults of realisation and asceticism have always been in the ascendant and became sometimes degraded into the pompous affirmations of superstition and the barren denials of mere self-mortification. Realisation and asceticism were not entirely absent there; nor have rationalism and enjoyment been absent here. The difference is one of emphasis, of attention, of concentration. The difference is one of

the basic idea, of the pervasive mood, of the ultimate goal. So long as the human embodiment endures, each man must bear the stress of environment. But each race has its own outlook, its own response, its own resistance. It behoves us to study each culture as it is expressed in its highest work, as it is lived by its finest types, and as it is realised in a greater or a less measure by the average man brought up under its influence.

The Hindu culture has never fled away from the realities of life. It has always sought to see life steadily and see it whole. It has always made concessions to human weakness without compromising its ideals. It has always tried to be true to the kindred points of heaven and home. It has striven to discipline desire into dispassion, refine dispassion into devotion, and etherealise devotion into the realisation of perfect wisdom which is the final fruit of knowledge and of love.

Nor does Hindu culture lead to any devitalisation as confidently asserted by our critics within and without. The best proof of the falseness of this statement is that it has lived, that it began to live before other cultures were born, and that it is destined to outlive them all. It proclaims a higher reality than the

reality of this life, but seeks to rise on the tip-toe of expectant and inquiring knowledge and love to peer into the higher reality and does not seek to fly away from life on earth. Because this birth is conceived of as a wave in the ocean of births, does it lose its value on that account? The *Kenopanishad* declares;

Ihachèdavedeet atha satyamasthi
Nachedihàvedeenmahathee Vinashtih !
Bhooteshu Bhootheshu vichitya Dheerah
Pretyàsmallokàdamritah bhavanthi !!

(If we realise Him here, great is the attained truth realised for ever; if we do not realise Him here great is our loss. Having searched for Him amidst all creation, the men of wisdom turn from the shadows of ignorance and attain immortality by attaining oneness with Him). Life is not for us a puppet dance pulled by the strings of relentless fate but is a rythmical self-propelled onflow towards Love. Hindu culture does not want to waste vitality but wants to conserve it and guide it towards God. Of all the vapid charges brought against it, this is therefore the most meaningless and absurd of all. Is every superficial and supercilious critic to come forward and say that life is not valued by Hinduism, because Hindu culture wants to discipline life

and would not allow the rare dower of human embodiment to be wasted in vain and endless successions of recurrent tasks and petty pleasures? Unfortunately this foolish cry is taken up in a parrot-like way by many of our own men whose ignorance of Hindu culture is only equalled by their contempt of it, and who by their acts and attitude are doing incalculable harm to themselves, to their race and to the world.

The Hindu culture proclaims not the suppression of desires but the satisfaction of legitimate desires leading up to desirelessness and dispassion. Man has to rise from the lower self through society and nature to God. Each higher self-dedication necessarily involves a contraction of the region of desire and an expansion of the realm of love. No one is asked to renounce in a hurry and to repent at leisure. Indeed there must be a training for the right renunciation and the right form and degree of renunciation and at the right time. It is the training for righteous and rational enjoyment that is the best training for perfect renunciation.

In fact Hindu culture has met life and time at all points, and hence it is that it has been able to live and live such an energetic and

puissant life. No culture which is out of touch with the ever-changing environment can live at all. No culture which is out of touch with the fountain of racial life and energy can maintain its type persistently and well. No culture which is out of touch with God can give those born in it a real and persistent Godward urge. Hindu culture has always felt the plastic stress of circumstance and has shown a harmonious combination of ready adaptiveness and healthy reaction. It has preserved the racial type in undiminished bloom. It has always preserved its loyalty to God, and has never let go its hold upon its love of God, whatever were the humiliations that overtook in its outer life. Is there any wonder in its perennial youthfulness in its perfection of energy, in its radiance of self-realisation?

We must bear in mind that in every society the social ideals and institutions, literature and art and philosophy and religion are not isolated or disconnected excrescences or ornamentations but are vital self-revelations of the national soul. The social ideals and institutions are the framework, the body, the indispensable means of self-functioning for the cultural consciousness. Literature and art express its visions of beauty and perfection. Philosophy and

religion contain its most intimate realisations. All these are inseparable like the stem and the flower and the fruit.

In the case of Hindu culture there can be no ignoring of the fact that all these elements of racial life were dominated by a sense of the unity of things, of the divine immanence in all things, and of the supremacy of the inner life. If these disappear, Hindu culture disappears. This is a matter about which there could be no compromises or concessions. The modern educated Hindu mind feels bewildered between the old and the new and is unable to know how it should be itself while taking full possession of the achievements of the scientific reason and the political experimentation of the West.

Let us first take up the differentia of Hindu religion. When the modern Hindu is told by his western friend that the Hindu conception of divine immanence is mere animism, he feels ashamed and defeated. Does he reflect a moment upon the sophistry of this statement? The Hindu religion does not arrive at any attribution of a will to nature or natural objects from a superstitious assumption of will as the cause of activity. It declares that the whole is present in each part and that the

whole is perfection and consciousness and bliss *(Sachidananda)*. Where is the animistic superstition in this view ?

To use the expressive phrases which were given currency by Dr. Miller, the chief and peculiar traits of the Hindu religion are its doctrines of the ominpenetrativeness of God and of the solidarity of man. I am discussing in a later chapter the charges of critics against our religion and the refutations of those charges. Hindu religion has not been content with an extracosmic God but has realised Him both as Immanence as well as Transcendence. It has as basis a perfect science of noetics—a unique feature not shared by it with any other religion in the world. Its assertion of the Infinite unity and its clear and comprehensive and analytical statement of the universal categories are other unique features. Its doctrines of Karma and reincarnation enable us to understand the present in the light of the past and use the present to usher in the blissful future. Its comprehensive conception of sacrifice enables it to link up here and hereafter, earth and heaven. Its doctrine of *Samskâras* enables it to take up each individual and perfect him by purifications and disciplines to attain God. Its conceptions of the threefold

debts and of the five daily sacrifices enable it to relate the individual life at once to other men, to the whole realm of sentient being, to sages, to gods, to the past and the present and the future, and to God Himself. It has further striven to adjust not only the individual towards the life divine but also to adjust the social life towards the life divine, because it knows that man has to reach God through nature and through society, through contemplation and through service. Its social order and its fourfold discipline of the individual life are co-operant towards the same end. Its ethical ideal and practice are high and noble and are further conceived of as a means to spiritual vision and spiritual ecstacy. These are a few of the major differentia of Hindu religion.

Some critics within and without seem to be bewildered by the diversity and manifoldness of the Hindu philosophic and religious ideas. In India religion is regarded not as creed but as realisation. The diversity of doctrines and *Sadhanas* is the necessary result of the mind which is finite seeking to vision God who is infinite. When the finite is turned towards the Infinite, when the eternal is sought to be related to time, when the universal is sought to be related to the individual, there must be diverse-

ness of visioning and grasp and diverseness of levels. There will be diverseness of seekers and diverseness of search. But He is the centre of all search, of all realisation. Diversity of levels of truth and diversity of seekers (*adhikaris*) cannot be banished. India has always been averse to coerce all men with the sword or with hellfire to accept one set of beliefs alone as the sole means of salvation. The abovesaid diversity is not mere diversity of symbols but diversity of realisations. This superb conception is not a concession to weakness but an affirmation of an intensely realised fact that Truth has a compositeness and a gradation unknown to those who live in narrow circles of thought. Those who have been brought up under the system of exclusions can never realise this all-inclusiveness; those whose minds have been fed upon the ascetic fare of an exclusive creed can never appreciate this rich inclusive daintiness of emotion and ecstacy. Religion does not dwell in India on an isolated peak making futile calls upon the wandering minds of men but moves about with us in the hearth and in the workshop and makes a slow and unobtrusive and continuous appeal till it disciplines us fully in self-restraint and dispassion and leads us to our Maker.

Another of the differentia of the Hindu religion is the idea of the *adhikari.* Other religions make a spiritual call from a distance and move away unobservant of the numbers following or their actions and thoughts. At the same time their of affirmations, an eternal heaven and an eternal hell are bewildering and depressing. But Hinduism knows and proclaims that all are on the Godward path and that the interposed obstruction between us and God-realisation is of our own making and can be removed by us. Each man must do this work of clearance in the way best suited to his then stage of evolution. Because one man does not need symbols and images and ceremonies, does it follow that all others do not require the same. A beautiful Sanskrit stanza says:—

Pratimâsvaprabudhânam yoginam hridayê [Harih !

(Hari is in images to the unenlightened and [in heart to the yôgis.)

From symbols and rituals we rise to devotion and wisdom and finally attain God-realisation. The way and the guide must vary from stage to stage. The doctrines of Ishta Devata and Abhimata Dhyana as elaborated in the Yoga sutras of Patanjali show this truth

very well. What matters is not so much the particular form or force of the urge towards God but the urge itself. Once it begins it fulfils itself and leaves us face to face with the Supreme. This is the great lesson taught in the Gita, enforced in a thousand ways by the Puranas, and demonstrated in a million ways by the saints and sages of India in their pure, dedicated and illumined lives.

Another of the differentia of Hindu religion is that it recognised the gradation of sciences, *Atmavidya* (the science of self-realisation) being the supreme science. The Lord says in the Gita that He is *Adyatma Vida Vidyânâm* (the science of self-realisation among the sciences). This supreme science is described by him as *Sarva Guhya Tamam Sastram* (the supreme occult science). *Raja Vidya* (the sovereign science), and *Parama Dharma* (the highest Dharma.) A beautiful Sanskrit stanza says:

Ayam hi paramô dharmah yadyôgenâtma-
[*darsanam !*

(This is the supreme Dharma by which we realise the self through Yoga). It was not an accident that in our holy land even the lower sciences were set on their line of evolution by the *rishis.* Only then could there be perfect harmony between the subject sciences and the

sovereign science. We have no divorces between poetry and ethics, between ethics and philosophy, between philosophy and religion. We have no cults of beauty for beauty's sake and art for art's sake; we have no ethical denunciations of art; we have no philosophical negations of God; and we have no ecclesiastical thunders against philosophy.

I shall now cursorily mention here the other differentia of Hindu religion. It did not favour the growth of magnified ecclesiastical orders and hierarchies and mediations but emphasised the imperious and inevitable necessity of each man's direct inner approach towards God with the aid of his self-chosen Guru. It has conceived of embodied existence as a pilgrimage to the shrine of Truth. To it the realisation of the Infinite is not a philosophical generalisation but a living realisation. It emphasises the supreme need and the supreme value of cosmic consicousness and cosmic vision.

In India philosophy and religion have never been kept apart as in the west and neither has been kept apart from life. Hindu philosophy is the statement of the truths of religion in a logical form. Hindu religion is Hindu philosophy raised from statement and affirmation to

realisation and experience. Both are the foci of the orbit of Hindu life. The Hindu religion is pliable but firm, ever-inquiring but definite, tolerant but conscious of its radiant superiority and all-sufficingness. The Hindu philosophy is all-inclusive but full of gradations, clear and precise in definitions and concise and incisive in its arguments, and quite aware of the need for testing reason by revelation. This was the reason why philosophy was in this country so subtle yet so fruitful, so logical and yet so spiritual, so self-reverent yet so full of adoration for the true essence of religion. Victor Cousin says about it: "When we read with attention the poetical and philosophical monuments of the East, above all those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe, we discover there many a truth and truths so profound, and which make such contrast with the meanness of the result at which European genius has sometimes stopped, that we are constrained to bend the knee before the philosophy of the East and to see in this cradle of the human race the native land of the high est philosophy". This proud distinction has been the result of its harmonious blending of analysis and synthesis, of reason and revelation, of life here and hereafter.

The most important of the *differentia* of Hindu philosophy are its conception of the *Atman* and the acuteness of its psychology. By a rigorous self-analysis and by strict logical methods it has seen and shown how there is a permanent basis in relation to which there is the flux of mind and senses and sense-objects in the world of phenomena. The changeless and noumenal self as the permanent factor amidst the flux of things was realised and proclaimed always and all along. Western systems of philosophy have never grasped or stated this principle with clearness of realisation and enunciation. Western realism ignores the place of mind; western idealism ignores the place of matter; and western pragmatisim knows neither mind nor matter well and thinks of mind in terms of matter and of matter in terms of mind and talks of everything as relative without knowing or pausing to inquire to what it is relative.

Every school of philosophy—materialistic, nihilistic, atheistic, evolutionary, atomic, idealistic, realistic, monistic, dualistic, pluralistic—is represented in India. The chief hall-mark of Hindu philosophy is its free atmosphere of discussion and ratiocination. The heterodox schools of philosophy slowly disappeared. Out

of the orthodox schools, those which have the widest sway accept the Veda, the Iswara, Soul and Mukti, and state the categories of existence in a manner consistent with reason and revelation. It is not possible to describe the declarations of Hindu philosophy in any detail here but we must remember these prominent differentia of Hindu philosophy if we want to realise its unique points of distinction and supremacy ever the other philosophical systems in the world.

In India Dharma has been a word to conjure with. It is the sole and supreme means leading to the sole and supreme end of God-love and God-realisation. It has been taught in all possible and imaginable ways-by express teaching, by commands, by stories, by literature and art, in temples, on the stage, and by the living examples of saints and *avatârds*. It implies structure and function; it has reference to a type; and it is based on discipline. It is the meeting-point of the individual and of society, of religion and philosophy, of here and hereafter, of man and God. It is the cement of society, the bond of love, the means of attainment of God. That is the reason why it has been so much prized and praised in India. Without knowing its value and loving it and living it,

the secrets of Hindu culture can never be realised. None of the *differentia* of Hindu culture can even be understood and built into ourselves except through its aid and with its co-operation. It is not mere external command; it is an internal law of being. It is not a mere injunction; it is a means of self-expression. Hindu society is a framework designed for reincarnating souls of a certain attainment of purity to enable them to fulfil the soul's eternal quest for God; and Dharma is the law of its being, by obedience to which we can preserve the framework for ever and achieve also individual salvation.

I shall now proceed to consider the *differentia* of Hindu art. Hindu art is spiritual and intuitive—there is no ignoring or getting over of that fact. Reason corrects and transcends the senses; in the same way intuition corrects and transcends reason. Hindu art has accepted intuition as its guide, and if we do not know this we would have lost the key to the right understanding of Hindu art. The Greek canons of art by which the western mind swears to-day can give us no help here. They must stand at the gate like the figures on Hindu *gopurams* (temple spires) and cannot lead us within the shrine. Hindu art does not

scorn natural accuracy or sensuous beauty and delight but it cannot and will not stop there. It hears the call of the soul and realises it and comes out and builds in beauty what it saw in bliss. To the supreme Hindu artist, vision is the chief thing, and tune and colour are but adjuncts and accessories. To him æsthetic suggestion is secondary to spiritual realisation; form is but a vehicle for spiritual emotion; it passes not from technique to idea, but to technique from idea; it desires to be an aid and ministrant primarily to meditation and secondarily to sensuous pleasure. Indian architecture, sculpture, and painting are spiritual epics in stone and marble and colour. Each has the same unity in diversity, the same soaring into the realm of the spirit, the same suggestion of strength in reserve. Each is a miniature reproduction of some rich and rare fragment of cosmic variety informed and sustained and illumined by divine unity. If Europe condemns this, the condemnation has no more sense than Voltaire's condemnation of Shakespeare as a drunken barbarian. The severity of the classical style cannot comprehend the abundance of the romantic style; and neither can understand the Indian suggestion of spiritual unity through cosmic diversity.

Shakespeare's abundance was because he saw the whole of life. The Hindu artist's abundance and fine excess are due to his seeing the whole of life and the whole of the super-life. The appeal of the Hindu art is not to the eye and to the mind through the eye but to the soul through the eye and the mind. Its effort has always to combine decorative abundance and spacious unity.

Thus art has its source in intuition in India. Those who deny intuition can never realise the beauty of Indian art. Genius is only a nearer approach to the central unity. In India the most perfect geniuses have been the greatest saints. India has never been content with the minor realities of sensation and major realities of emotion but has striven to find the supreme realities of the spirit. She has not scorned pictorial imitations of nature. But she has tried to come into the gardens of life from the central shrine and not merely go into the gardens of life from the desert spaces of life. India has never cared for mere realistic art. "For why" as Deussen asked, "should the artist wish to imitate laboriously and inadequately what nature offers everywhere in attainable profusion?" Burne-Jones said once; "Transcripts from nature, what do I want

with transcripts? I prefer her own signature. I don't want forgeries more or less skilfull . . . . . It is the message, the burden of a picture that makes its real value". He said at another time: "You see, it is these things of the soul that are real . . . the only real things in the universe". The real lotus has a freshness and a fragrance that no painted lotus can have. But a lotus with Lakshmi in it can be seen only with the aid of the saint and the artist till we see the vision in our hearts. We can see many dancers, but not a Nataraja. Photographic accuracy is good; but the expression of *rasa* is better and the representation of the divine is the best of all. It is no doubt wrong to seek to combine natural inaccuracy with the expression of *rasa* or the representation of the divine. That is a defect of the artist, not of the art. Even in the minor decorative arts of India, as for example jewellery, the motifs are taken from nature but there is no slavish imitation of nature. Hindu art is thus a synthetic whole which sees the splendours of nature in relation to the ineffable splendours of God.

The most important note of Hindu art is its suggestion of the spiritual and the infinite. This is done by a subtle symbolism. Sensuous beauty is used as the symbol of Eternal and

Spiritual light. Human love is a symbol of divine union. The Hindu's sacremental conception of life enables him to relate the temporal to the infinite, the fleeting to the eternal, the human to the divine. As Dr. A. K. Commaraswami says well: "But in this religious art it must not be forgotten that life is not to be represented for its own sake, but for the sake of the Divine expressed in and through it". We must at the same time be on our guard against an indiscriminate use of the theories of symbology and allegory. Some modern crítics speak in one breath of yogic vision and in the next breath of symbolism and allegory. The one is a human realisation; the other is a human creation. The one is an acceptance by the mind from something higher than itself; the other is the giving by the mind out of its own inner richness and abundance. The one is an influence from the Atman; the other is an effluence from the mind. It is therefore clear that the divine forms and actions are visioned truths and realised realities and not mere symbolical and allegorical representations. The real source of power for art is, therefore, *bhakthi*. It is because of the absence of real *bhakthi* that this essential truth is ignored or even denied.

Only the rebirth of devotion can ensure the rebirth of real art in India.

The objection of western critics to our art's alteration of the normal human pose in India has no real force. If the alteration is purposeless or ignorant, the objection would be sound. If it is purposeful and informed, the objection would be mere sound. If man can transform nature elsewhere, is he to be forbidden to do so in the realm of art alone? Can he not suggest new rythms of art to supplement the rythms of nature? As Dr. Comaraswami says well: "We do wrong to demand of the artist that he should compete with the appliances of science, we should ask from him not realism, but truth, sincerity, imagination and emotion". If when an artist sets out to paint a human figure he is inaccurate, he should be blamed. Even here it is not photographic accuracy that should be demanded but essential accuracy. Anatomical accuracy is better than anatomical inaccuracy but essential accuracy is better than mere anatomical accuracy. But in regard to the representations of the divine, are we to fetter vision? Overaccuracy of detail would even spoil the suggestiveness and the effect. In Hindu images the pupils of the eyes are never

prominently brought out. Has any one felt any incongruity in this? Who can bring out the perfection of compassion and love in the divine *Katakshâ*? Cannot something be left to the kindred emotion in the spectator's breast to fulfil, complete and realise? Hindu art forbids the bringing out of veins and sinews in images. Certain sacrifices are necessary to suggest mystery. Thus Hindu art consists of representations of human and natural life in which memory-pictures full of emotion and *rasa* take precedence over mere mechanical and photographic and anatomic and over-minute and over-elaborate accuracy, and representations of the divine in which the visions of the pure intuition are sought to be represented for their own sake and not as mere symbolism or allegory.

The past was the age of great architecture and sculpture because it had a spacious self-restrained dedicatedness of life which is foreign to the hurry and distractedness of the present age, a profundity of vision which was unlike the preoccupations of the present era, a restfulness of outlook which was quite different from our restlessness to-day, a willingness to labour and to wait which was entirely dissimilar to the modern feverish desire for immediate re-

sults. The supreme examples of Hindu sculpture and architecture are not to be found in the hybrid Gândharan art. A really vital and dispassionate history of Hindu art has yet to be written. Fergusson and Vincent Smith began this work, and Mr. Havell and Mr. Coomaraswami have cleared some misconceptions and done some preliminary spade work. In fact western scholarship has been at the same time a goad and a clog. It has set us thinking on some new lines but at the same time it has encumbered our feet with worthless and sometimes injurious speculations. It has mostly missed the unity of Indian life and the real impulses of Indian culture. Fergusson's misleading classifications of architectural styles, his ignorance of the aims and ideals, his insufficient knowledge of the origin and his many errors as to Hindu history have given an entirely wrong turn to the study and interpretation of Hindu art. Hindu image-making and sculpture and architecture are as old as Hindu culture, and their developments have had a continuous history. It is not possible to deal here with the growth and expansion of Hindu architecture and sculpture. But we must remember that these arts are as vitally related to Hindu culture as

any other sphere of self-expression of the Hindu genius.

Hindu painting has also had a unique development. If we study the Ajanta fresco paintings and the Rajaput paintings and the paintings of Southern India and Northern India to-day, we can realise that equal attention was bestowed on beauty of colour and beauty of spiritual suggestion. The theory of art's *shadanga* (six limbs) was elaborated long, long ago. The Hindu dramas like Sakuntala and Ratnavali and Mrichakati are full of frequent references to widespread skill in painting, even kings and queens taking part in mastering this fine and beautiful art. The impulse of Indian painting as of Indian architecture and sculpture was a passionate clarity of vision seeking to suggest the infinite in the finite. Architecture and sculpture stress the rhythms of the infinite in the finite, while painting stresses the rhythms of the finite in the infinite. They rejoice in steadfast stellar splendour ; this rejoices in planetary movements and variations of glow. The six angas of painting themselves show the aesthetic and spiritual comprehensiveness of ancient Hindu painting. They are *rupabhada* (distinction and gradation of forms) *pramána* (proportion and perspective), *bháva* (the spiritual

emotion expressed by the form), *lâvanya*(quivering splend-our of, psychic loveliness), *sâdrisya* (fidelity and truth of form), and *vârnikabhanga* (harmonious combination of beautiful.colours.) The main appeal is however to the beauty behind the veil. The western painter does not go beyond imaginative realism; the Hindu artist in colour comes from the shrine of spiritual realisation through the gateway of colour into the world of outer reality. The former gives us idealised transcripts from nature; the latter gives us the realised visionings of the soul. Further, eastern painting is an art of 'line'; while western painting is an art of 'mass'. Its appeal is more varied and more individual than the appeal of the latter, just as Hindu music is more varied and more individual than western music.

I shall now discuss the *differentia* of Hindu literature. The Sanskrit language by itself is the most perfect vindicator of Hindu culture. It is vibrant, clear, powerful, yet reposeful, self-poised, and full of regnant peace. It is by itself an incarnation of Hindu culture. Its clarity,its compactness and precision,its richness of expression and greater richness of suggestion, its sonorous sweetness, and its harmonious and modulated and highly-evolved *rhythms*

have secured for it universal admiration and affection. Mr. W. C. Taylor calls it "a language of unrivalled richness and variety; a language, the parent of all those dialects that Europe has fondly called classical—the source alike of Greek flexibility and Roman strength." Sir William Jones spoke of it as being "of a wonderful structure, more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either." Even to-day it is a living language, though its foes here and abroad have dared to call it a dead language. As stated by me elsewhere: "The Sanskrit language has so become a portion of us that it may well be said that our heart beats in tune with its golden cadences. On all the important occasions in our lives the Sanskrit language plays a predominant part. Almost the first articulate sounds that the child hears are in that tongue. The gracious accents of that language fall on the ears like a nectar-shower when we have to bid farewell to the earth and leave the warm precincts of the cheerful day. It is bound up with our wedded bliss and the joys of home life. It links the generations together by means of the *mantras* uttered during oblations and offerings. Above all it takes us on its far-spreading wings to the white

splendours of the Throne of Grace and dowers us with the ineffable raptures of the spirit. The epics and the most beautiful devotional lyrics in Sanskrit are read and chanted or are listened to by all true Hindus. That the Hindu race has all along regarded the Sanskrit tongue as alive is clear from the fact that the practice of composition in that language has had an unbroken history in this land." We know and feel it to be alive, and what do we care if you call it dead?

The vernaculars of India are of great beauty and vitality and have always been in living touch with the Sanskrit tongue. Diverse as they seem to be and even are to some extent, they have the kinship of a common and reverential love for the divine Sanskrit tongue and of a common social and religious culture inspiring them and sustaining them. They contain the supreme ethical and spiritual wisdom of the saints and sages of India in as abundant a measure as the Sanskrit tongue. The songs of Vidyapathi and Chandidas, the devotional hymns of Mira Bai, the famous Ram Mânas Saras of Tulsi Das, the songs of the saints of the Maharashtra, the Ramayana of Kamban, the ineffably beautiful and uplifting and inspiring *Tdevarams* and *Tiruvachakam* and

Tiruvoimozhi, and the recent masterpieces of Bankim Chander Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore—to name a few of the great literary treasures in the vernaculars of India—form a literature which can challenge comparison any with literature in the world in point of poetic vision, imaginative presentation, melody of style, criticism and interpretation of life, and the power of uplifting the earthly life unto the life divine.

The creative and interpretative splendour of Hindu literature is unique and unsurpassed. The vedic literature shows the Hindu mind in its fulness. It is immersed in the Infinite; it sees and declares the Eternal unity; it sees and declares also the divine diversities of place and function in the cosmos; it interprets the Infinite through the finite splendours of the mind and the finite splendours of nature; the relations of life are used as symbols of higher psychical relations; and we are made to realise the interpenetration of the realms of mind and matter by God. The spiritual poems of the Upanishads formed the soul informing the lovely frames of the later Indian poesies. If to-day literature in India is barren of high inspiration and wavers between inept absorption in the present and equally inept imitation of western

models, the cause is not far to seek. It has lost touch with the real source of life and is wandering about like a truant and foolish child. Unless once again we take to the study of the Vedas till they become a real element in our inner life, the present sterility will not cease to be. Even Pandits to-day pay verbal homage to the Vedas and merely make an intensive study of later works. It is in the Vedas that we have the key to the secret of the greatness and vitality of Hindu culture and it is from them that the new and resistless self-perfecting impulse of Hindu culture, will be born again.

The great Ganga of Hindu literature has come down from the dazzling peaks of Vedic thought lit by the sun of God. It flowed down into the wide spaces of ordinary life as the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Subsequently the stream divided into the *Kavyas* etc., which are primarily secular but are spiritual in effect and the Puranas and the Tantras which are primarily spiritual but are full of manifold and intimate application to secular life. But the stream is one and the same. He who does not feel and love and realise this unity of Hindu literature has not understood its real glory, cannot bring into existence a vital literature

now, and can never inaugurate a new era of glorious literary achievement in India.

It is not possible to deal with all the differentia of Hindu literature in this small book. Hindu literature, like Hindu art, is not merely imitative and realistic but is creative and romantic in aim and achievement; it is reposeful and serene; it is devotional in inspiration and in expression; it searches for and reveals the unity of things and the divine foundations of life; and it relates everything in nature and in human life to God. The supreme poems of Hindu culture—the Ramayana and the Mahabharata—do not like the Iliad and the Odyssey stop with acquired success or regained home. They would have ended with regained thrones and restored wives if they had been after western models or were inspired by any but the Hindu culture. But they show the triumphs not only on earth but also in heaven, show the inter-relatedness of heaven and earth, reveal Dharma as the sustainer of the worlds and God as the sustainer of Dharma, make us feel that the raptures of renunciation are the real joy of life and can be won only through disciplined life and legitimate enjoyment, and kindle in us a living sense of a beneficent and overruling Providence. The abduction of Sita

has a higher significance and a more uplifting influence on the mind than the abduction of Helen. Sita is as different from Helen as the pole-star is from the inconstant moon. Savitri's pure and quenchless love and bold quest of her lord are as superior to Laodamia's passionate prayer, as the fixed splendour of the sun in the sapphire sky is superior to the agitated twinklings of the glow-worm on the earth. Rama and Krishna are as superior to Achilles and Hercules as the soul is superior to the body.

This is not all. These great poems as well as other great Hindu poetry tranquillises us and puts us into moods of reverence and love and composure and serenity. This is the reason why there has not been any great tragedy in Hindu literature. Tragedy was not unknown but the *Satwic* Hindu mind always led sorrow to eventual peace and composure and serenity and felt a void and an incompleteness in mere tragedy. The great drama of *Sakuntala* could have been easily left completed at the point of separation and sorrow. But the great poet takes us from the feelings of pity to something even greater than pity—composure and reattained peace and reverential devotion. Pity is no doubt higher than mere

enjoyment but how much higher than both is reverential, chastened, happy and tranquillised love!

Equally remarkable is the treatment of love in Hindu literature. The Hindu's reverence for womanhood is at the same time practical and chivalrous, rooted in life and yet looking before and after. No literature is more full of the ecstacies of first love and the stiller but intenser raptures of fulfilled and later love which looks through the individual to the society and to the past and even unborn generations, through the body to the soul, through the needs of the day to the most intimate and eternal realisations which will last for ever. Bhavabhuthi has summed up the Hindu conception of love in the following perfect stanza:

Adwaitam sukhaduhkayòranugunam sarvásvav-
[*asthasu yad-*
Vishrámo hridayasya yatra jarasà yasmin-
[*nahárya rasah!*
Kälenávaràuatyayát pariṇate yatsnahasore sthi-
[*tham*
Bhadram Premo sumänushena kathamapyekam
[*hi tatpràpyathe!!*

(Rarely is obtained by the fortunate and happy man that supreme and auspicious conjugal

affection, which is equal and unaltered in joy and in sorrow, which is uniform in all the fortunes of life, which is a soft rest for the spirit of man, which has a sweetness which age cannot take away, and which is of the essence of love when time has mellowed and removed the shyness of youth.)

I might go on expatiating indefinitely upon the beauties of Hindu literature but must restrain myself and stop here as this is not a book on Hindu literature alone but on Hindu culture generally and especially on the present and the future of Hindu culture. I must not however omit to mention here the acute ness and analytical manifoldness and sweetness of Hindu aesthetics *(Alankàra Sastra,)* which have ranged over the whole realm of beauty of sound and sense, and the wonderful quintessential wisdom contained in Hindu gnomic and didactic literature *(subhäshita and Niti)* which reveals to us all that is worth knowing and feeling in life in the most memorable and appealing and beautiful manner.

What shall I say of Hindu music? I have reserved this almost to the last because here is a realm which is all our own, where the enchantments of sound take us always Godward, peaceward and loveward, and where

tranquillised emotion opens our inner eyes to see the Eternal Beatific vision. Some say that it is melancholy. Let Mrs. Mann answer: " I am often told that all Indian music is melancholy. How can I convey to you that spirit which is sad yet without pain? That is the delicious melancholy of Indian music. Can a lover be joyful away from his beloved? Can a musician sing joyfully, really joyfully, whilst he wanders on this earth? Would it not be sorrow if he forgets his exile? Is not the remembrance of the face of the Beloved more dear though fraught with the pain of separation?" Hindu music has thus as its peculiar glories its tenderness, its golden melancholy, its power of evoking emotional states, and its glad and reverential allegiance to religion. Its *forte* is melody, not harmony. Its allowing of a free scope to *Manodharma* (musical improvisation) to pour forth the fulness of the rich emotional contents of a tune and its conception of divine agencies presiding over each *Raga* and *Ragini* are among the other chief *differentia* of the art of Hindu music.

Hindu culture has been great not only in its transcendental elements but also in its positive elements. I have already shown this fact sufficiently well. He who thinks or says that

the Hindu genius fled away from the realities of life or thought only of the hereafter and the remote in preference to the present and the near is one that cannot or will not see facts. The Hindu has always been true to the kindred points of heaven and home. In fact he has tried to walk in his home in the light of heaven. But even in the realms of positive sciences he has had his specialities of outlook and of method. To him science was not a child's handling of the storage battery of Nature's energy. He knew the gradations of natural energies and always sought to use them for ethical and spiritual ends. He knew and used the subtle energies of nature by yogic mastery in a manner unknown and even undreamt of to-day. But he used the subtle energies to good purposes and prevented the lower energies from being misused for the destruction or unhappiness of man. His military science was a wonderful combination of efficiency and chivalry and robbed conquest of its sting and domination of its evil results. His industrial organisation was non-competitive yet elastic, orderly yet progressive, stable yet self-adjusting to a changing world. His social organisation also had these excellent traits in a liberal measure. His local self-government was able

to combine well central strength and village autonomy. His political organisation found harmonious and spacious room for monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy and made all these subject to Dharma.

Such have been the great *differentia* of Hindu Culture and such its past and its present and its possible, nay certain, future. If we but lovingly study it, it is sure to become an integral portion of our being and enable us to be ourselves and front the new sunrise with a new and radiant manliness and godliness of spirit.

CHAPTER V

THE CONFLICTS OF HINDU CULTURE

THE world is a great arena of ideas. It has also been a great theatre of outer conflicts as well. But the conflicts of cultures have been even more deadly than the conflicts of armies and societies and states. They have been all the deadlier on account of their very silence. Embattled cultures have met in mortal shock again and again. The history of civilisation is more the history of these cultural conflicts than even of the clash of armies and of the rise and fall of dynasties. To the ordinary man who is content with the outside of things the picturesque history of human passion is enough. But to the serious student of life what is of interest is the history of the conflicts of cultures all over the world.

India has never been in splendid isolation and she was not meant to be in that state. She is on the highroad of the march of universal civilisation. The Himalayas no doubt shut out the bleak and chill northern blasts and mount watchful guard over her eternal fruitfulness and golden abundance. They keep away also

the footsteps of presumptuous invaders. But they open out in the East and in the West for cultural arrivals and departures. The seas connected as much as separated India and the rest of the world. India had commerce with China and with Rome. Her *sanyasis* whose home was the whole world went everywhere.

When describing the History of Hindu culture I have in a measure touched upon its conflicts as well. I shall now merely show the inner significance of those conflicts. The outstanding lesson that we have to learn from them is the fact that Hindu culture, despite its occasional failures and frequent triumphs during its contacts and conflicts with other cultures, is Hindu to its very core. The centuries have come and gone; the waves of endless invasion have left many sediments and deposits in the course of their ceaseless advance and regression; time, the tireless moulder and changer of the frame of things, has been as busy here as elsewhere; and the face of the country has evidently undergone many changes. But who that has studied Hindu life from the inside can stand up and say that the spirit has been changed? Who that knows the springs of inspiration for literature and art and philosophy and religion even to-day can declare that a

strange transformation of outlook has come over the Hindu people? Who that has been amidst us and with us and of us can place his hand on his heart and say that the Hindu race to-day is like the Greek race or the Latin race —having only the physical inheritance and, even that, tainted beyond measure and utterly unlike in mental and spiritual endowment to the great Greek and Latin races of antiquity?

In fact, observers of Hindu culture from within and without have declared again and again its unity and its steadfast rootedness in itself. Mr. Havell has shown how the Veda has been and is and will be the inspiration of Hindu art and life. Even if the intellectuals in India have wavered in their allegiance to Hindu culture and its central affirmations and disciplines, the masses have been faithful thereto and have by mere momentum brought the erratic individuals back to their right places as the inheritors and the transmitters and the refiners of that culture.

Hindu culture has had its conflicts not only at home but also abroad. It has not only met other cultures on its own soil but on their soil as well. It did not however go to other lands at the head of armed forces and embattled hosts. But it went in the wake of commerce

and colonisation. It has learnt as well as taught. It has never swerved from opposition; yet it has never tried to suppress other cultures. Its method was persuasion, not suppression or destruction.

What has it learnt and what has it given? It has had its inherent tolerance intensified by its vision of intense faith when found in other cultures, for it has always been sure that faith fulfils itself and will lead those cultures to itself. It has learnt to realise the need for conservation and protection of its culture, for its catholicity and mildness might have otherwise ruined it and disabled it from living to enrich the other cultures of the world. It has taught to all other cultures its own vision of unity and divine immanence; it has taught its ideal of non-aggressive and self-preservative might; it has taught its ideals of *Santhi* and *Ahimsa*; and it has always kindled god-love wherever it has gone.

In India itself we see how the greater ideals of Hindu culture were always presented side by side with its lesser ideals to enable the former to live down the latter, not by violent removal but by slow purification and elevation and assimilation. Hindu culture learnt from its rebellious child Budhism, which in its haste

to get rid of animal sacrifies threw overboard the Vedas as well, a new tenderness for life or rather an intensification of its old tenderness for life. It learnt from Islam, which persecuted it but could not subdue it, a new and intimate sense of brotherhood or rather an intensification of its old sense of brotherhood. It learnt also to realise more intensely that image worship is a means and not an end. It learnt to realise also that it must not forget the Transcendence of God in His Immanence. Not one element was newly learnt. But the new emphasis on some of its old aspects and elements was itself of the greatest value.

In fact the great lessons of Indian history are of the highest educative value. They are the lessons of unity, of synthesis, of harmony, and of the maintenance of a spiritual basis of culture. The synthetising power had already manifested itself as a deep-rooted energy of the Hindu mind. Each new invasion and each new arrival merely gave it a wider scope and a higher manifestation and application. India is the workshop of Providence to show to the world the means of attainment of universal unity.

The blossomings of the old culture as intensified and energised by the later conflicts

began to show themselves in the Maratha federation in the West and the Vijayanagar kingdom in the south. These reaffirmations of Hindu culture show the old power and the new application. But as yet something more was wanted for linking up the ends of India in a new and vital way. The note of modernity had to come. India had to blend perfectly ancient peace and modern power. The West had to come to the East both to learn and to give. The present conflict of the Hindu culture with Western culture is but a friendly wrestling match to give new mightiness to both. The world shall yet witness a rebirth of peace in power and power in peace from the commingling and the conflict of the two greatest cultures of the world.

CHAPTER VI

HINDU CULTURE AND ITS CRITICS

HINDU culture has been admired and abused from before the birth of Christ and we Hindus can afford to look complacently on the hysterics of ill-informed praises and the howlings of ill-informed condemnation. I have already quoted above the continuous testimony of an admiring world in regard to the splendour of the Indian mind. Men like Archer and S. C. Mookerjee are mere devil's advocates and are of value only to the extent of increasing and intensifying by recoil our self-awareness and self-realisation. The rhapsodies of these super-journalists and super-sapient scribblers have no other value whatever.

If I deal here with some of their ill-natured and venomous falsehoods, it is not because I am afraid that the fair name of Hindu culture will in any way be tarnished by such throwing of dirty mud by dirty hands or because there are not abler defenders of Hindu culture than myself, but because Hindu youth studying in diverse places of study with diverse degrees of

inattention to Hindu culture and misrepresentation of Hindu culture may be put to the painful necessity of unlearning many evil lessons early learnt. A culture that cannot defend its young children from insidious poisons and more insidious neglect is one that is doomed to perish. No culture lives apart from the men of the race, and the heart-point of the culture is more the youth of the race than those who have passed or are passing into the shadows of life.

The modern Hindu is told by his Western intellectual guide that yoga is only self-hypnotism and that *samadhi* is only a cataleptic state and that intuition *(vogaja pratyaksha)* is only a hallucination. He, poor gullible fool, swallows all this. There are credulities and superstitions of science as there are credulities and superstitions of ignorance. The best proof of the fallacy of this view is in what is not done—the performance of yoga. Yoga is the gateway to a deeper experience—as real as the experience of the senses. There are spiritual values as surely as there are scientific values and ethical values. Because the West has had a religious consciousness swinging between blind belief and agnostic scepticism, are we to condemn our super-sciences of the soul? Yoga is the fine

and supreme art of spiritual meditation based on disciplined life and ceaseless practice. It is the art of the attainment of the Supreme by the process of mental concentration and purification. The control of Prana is only a great means to a greater end. The Hindu psychology, subtler than its Western counterpart, recognises gradations in the mind. We have *manas*, *chitta*, *budhi* and *ahamkara* (sensation, emotion, will and egoism). We have to overcome the impure *vàsanas* (tendencies) which are carried by us from birth to birth, with the help of higher and purer tendencies made dynamic by the force of our will. I do not propose to go here into the secrets of *yoga*. But we must not forget that through *yoga* we reach the centre whence the radii proceed. Thought is not the product of the brain but a power or force or *shakthi* using the brain as its organ. If we master the higher regions of thought, the lower regions of thought and the outer world which itself is controlled by lower thought, become our subject realm. *Samadhi* is thus all-observant spiritual perception and the realisation of the divine aspect of things.

The modern educated Hindu is told by his Western guide that the Hindu doctrines of karma and reincarnation are a negation of the

will and a negation of the present and accepts the statement in an uncritical mood. The doctrine of karma, while explaining the present by the past, shows the all important character of the present. It is an incentive to energetic action and not an incentive to inaction. The self-restraints of life demand a higher energy and volition than the self-indulgences of life. Karma is a call to these higher efforts of self-restraint and self-realisation.

The modern educated Hindu mind is then told that Hinduism is pessimism and accepts the dictum of the autocrat of the fountain-pen. It is Western life and thought that are really pessimistic because they shut up man's infinity into the short span of human life and smother up the soul's aspirations and intuitions in the glittering garments of scientific jargon. Is there anything in Hindu thought to match the baleful illumination of the eternal flames of the Christian hell? Hindu pessimism is but the shadow cast by the tree of life in the eternal golden sunshine of divine bliss and love. It is but the expression of disappointment at the number of veils which our karma has woven between us and God. It is the cry of imperfection for perfection. The golden declaration of the soul being *Sachidananda* is the best refu-

tation of this cant about Hindu pessimism. Hindu asceticism is but a flight to a higher joy. It is not self-torture but self-realisation. The Hindu regards body as a burden from the point of view of the Absolute and of the goal but accepts it and even asks for it as a blessing which is the only means to attain the highest blessing of and auspiciousness of God-realisation.

Other charges brought by the West against Hindu religion are that it attends to the letter and not to the spirit, that it is hide-bound in forms, that it is not based on reason, and that it is antiquated. It cannot rebut the charge of being old, being the oldest of all the religions of the world. You may as well taunt a mother with motherhood. If old things are to go out of this self-boastful new age, God must go out first as being the oldest, and Hinduism will then go out in very good company. The charge of formalism comes with an ill grace from the inventors of the Inquisition. At any rate, the Hindus never burnt people for worshipping God in a form different from their own. Has not the West its own religious forms? Is not Sunday attendance at Church a form? Why do not people go into the chamber of the heart and pray there alone?

India at least knows the reality of the spirit and values forms only as the doors leading to the spirit. She has always known it. If others do not know this fact, she cannot help that. I have shown also how she has clearly defined the respective provinces of reason and revelation and harmonised both.

It is alleged further that Hindu culture has not emphasised moral life. Does it follow that because she has emphasised the spiritual life she has not emphasised the moral life? If a man is a millionaire, does it follow that he is not a master of a thousand pounds? The Katopanished declares—

Nâviratho duscharitât Nâsântho Nâsamâhitath!
Nasânthamânasôvâpi prajnanenainamavapnuy-
[ath!

(He who does not abstain from evil conduct, he who is not serene, he who is not self-reposeful, he whose mind is not at peace cannot attain Him; only by the realisation of wisdom can He be attained).

In fact Dharma is proclaimed by Hindu culture as the perfect means, and spiritual realisation is proclaimed as the final fruition. Obedience to Law flowers in fulness of spiritual freedom. Because Christianity failed to effectively spiritualise the West but merely

gave a new turn to ethical and philanthrophic life, does it follow that India must do the same? Indeed, some Western thinkers say, illogically enough, that Hindu religion makes no appeal to the ethical life and that Hindu ethics is too religion-ridden? These confusions of thought are as ridiculous as they are sickening.

In fact, because the West has come down the spiritual ladder from the religion of an extra-cosmic God, down the rungs of vague Theism and vaguer Deism, down to the rung of agnosticism or scientific religion declaring God to be law with a capital L, we are abused for not doing likewise! The West tells us: I have come down to enjoy the earth; why should you fly up to heaven? I have made progress as my ideal; why do you aim at perfection? I have made religion the slave of reason; why do you make religion the lord of reason? I have begun to scorn the ascetic life; why do you exalt it? I am content with the relative; why do you seek the Absolute? I declare the omnipresence of matter; why do you declare the omnipresence of God? I seek the enjoyments of life; why do you seek the disciplines of life? I prize the ermine and the purple; why do you revere the orange-robe of the *sanyasin*? I am content with science; why do you seek *yoga*?

In art I am content with natural forms and human forms; why do you seek to express the supernatural and the divine? I value life here; why do you value life hereafter? I delight in the personal; why do you seek the impersonal? I want to develop the ego; why do you try to suppress it? I want to train the mind; why do you try to transcend it? I seek movement and action; why do you seek equilibrium and peace? I rejoice in the rhythms of nature; why do you yearn for the rhythms of the spirit? In short, I am content to be here; why do you seek the Beyond? I am content with Man; why do you want God?

But we can only reply: We are we and we want to be ourselves. We have grown up in this mood and in this effort. We are used to them; we are proud of them; we are glad of them. We must preserve our distinctiveness at any cost. There is no sacrifice too great for such an attainment and such a consummation. We are not prepared to buy modernity at the cost of our distinctiveness, our *swabhàva.* We shall be glad to have the approval of the world. But we cannot afford to win it by giving up what is our own. S. C. Mookerjee says that in the universal dictionaries that word "Hindu" will mean moral cripples and moral

eunuchs and that "by the combined stroke of the pen of the civilised world of to-day, Hindus will be put outside the pale of modern European civilisation". He then threatens us by saying: "Hindus degenerate! If that be the verdict of the civilised world to-day, then a stronger or a more drastic punishment could scarcely be found in the whole of its high Penal Code". We can well afford to smile at these verbal fireworks. If the world is foolish enough to brand us degenerates, we can afford to leave it in its folly till it is educated to love our ideals. S. C. Mookerjee seems to regard himself as the keeper of the conscience of the world. We tell him and his obedient pupil, the world, that we are going to be ourselves and that we are going to take care of ourselves.

It is often said that Hinduism is polytheistic, and the finger of scorn is pointed at its thirty-three crores of Gods. Some scholars like Max Muller have also referred to the Hindu personifications of Nature and to the Hindu Henotheism. Are we to allow you to label us and then have the label abused? The Hindu religion tells us that God and his Shakthi are one; that each divine power is a form or manifestation or derivative energy; and that the One is in the Many and that the Many are in the

One. No Hindu has ever yet doubted, or failed to declare, the omnipresence, omnipotence, and unity of God. Are we to blame because you are unable to understand our ideals and our realisations?

The fact is that the Western ideas about Hinduism and the Western attempts to put it into one or the other of their religious compartments have been woeful failures. Hindu religion is not Pantheism because it realises that God is extra-cosmic as well as intra-cosmic, Transcendence as well as Immanence, Infinity as well as Fulness. It is not mere Polytheism because it realises in each minor divinity the omnipresence of the Supreme. It is not mere Idealism as it does not deny the relative reality of things. It is not Henotheism because each god is recognised as the Infinite God-head in one of His infinite functions. We must enter the temple of Hindu philosophy and religion with washed feet and folded palms and praying lips and adoring hearts if we want to have a revelation of their fulness and their innermost truth.

Another *bete noire* for the Western critic and the Indian reformer is image-worship. The real though unexpressed antagonism to it is contained in the fact that they do not have it

and that hence it must be an evil thing. They have been told times without number that it is not the stone that is worshipped; that the image is the meeting-point of two affluences of the soul and God; and that its consecration leads to a special helpfulness to us by a vital outflow of grace through it, just as when a button is pressed after the necessary electrical connections are established there is a flood of glorious light. Because you cannot understand the interconnections of the physcial and the super-physical, are we to be blamed for that? If you cannot realise the value and the means of mental concentration in religious realisation, are we to be blamed for that? If you do not want to have a living communion with God, are we to be forbidden to use the image for that purpose? The highest philosophy of image-worship is contained in the great stanza uttered by *Prahlada* in that gem of devotional literature—the Shrimad Bhagavatam:

Naivatmanah prabhurayam nijalabhapurnah
Mànam Janàdairdushah karuno Vrineethe ||
Yadyajjano bhagavathe vidhudheetha mànam
Tachatmane prathimukhasya yatha mukhasreeh ||

(The Supreme Lord, who is the ruler of all, full of His own infinite bliss, doth not humbly

seek the boon of honour from ignorant Man. He who shows reverence to God finds all the graces of his love shining on himself—just as when a face is decked with ornaments the beauty is fully reflected in its image in the mirror).

Again, other critics ask us, how have you dealt with the lower castes? "Have you not treated them badly?" I am going to deal with the Hindu caste system in some detail later on. We have had our own ideals and methods of social arrangement and social classification and social unity. We do not say that our present system is perfect. But is your system, my friend, a perfect one? How have you been dealing with social strata yourself? Mr. Havell says in his History of Aryan Rule in India: "The British factory hand and dweller in the city slums sings when he goes to war because war is for him a release from servitude and misery far more degrading than the Indian caste system at its worst". Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

It is impossible to refer here to all the critics and their criticisms of Hindu culture. The best answer to them is a request to study Hindu culture and learn its *differentia* and then come. I am reminded here of a story

about an expounder of Bhagavata. He came to a king and announced in a self-satisfied way that he was a great expounder of that wonderful work. The king who was a perfect devotee asked him to be his guest and read the *Bhagavatham* once again and then come to teach. At the conclusion of the study the Pandit became so fired by the spirit of the book that in a mood of divine renunciation he left quietly in the night forgetting all his previous pride of learning. Let the critic but study and then he will become a friend and an ally and a fellow-devotee at the shrine of Hindu Culture.

After all, may we not turn round and ask our critics, what better culture have you to offer us? There is no use in referring to dead cultures which were unable to confer the primary and supreme gift of life. Taking modern European culture, despite its scientific, economic, commercial, political, and territorial greatness, has it not got its own drawbacks? Is the massing of huge populations in towns an unmixed blessing? Is slum life a national good? Has not man become materialistic and restless? Is he not becoming an adjunct to machinery, a spring in a mechanism? Is not humanity becoming bankrupt in beauty, in

love, and in peace there? Do we not see the pitiful spectacle of class dominations and of class wars, of lock-outs and of strikes? Let each race try to better its own culture while going nearer and nearer to God in spirit. When will that consummation come?

CHAPTER VII

THE FOREIGN GIFTS AND DEBTS OF HINDU CULTURE

THIS is an unwritten chapter in the history of universal culture. In one of his inspired and masterful utterances, Swami Vivekananda said: "Like the gentle dew that falls unseen and unheard, and yet brings into blossom the fairest of roses, so has been the contribution of India to the thought of the world". It is this silent influence that has been the cause of both subtle and far reaching effects and strange unperceiving neglect.

Ancient India had a large volume of foreign trade from China to Rome and this outer commerce of goods was not unaccompanied by an inner commerce of ideas. To the West, India has always been the home of beauty, romance and philosophy, and the treasure-house of the world. Hindu stories travelled all over the world delighting and instructing many more than Vishnu Sarma's royal pupils. Hindu philosophy and religion have had an extensive tour all over the world. By the influence of

one of their developments—Budhism—they dominated the whole of Eastern Asia including Japan and have continued to dominate it down to this day. Asoka's imperial love is more lovable than Alexander's imperial wars. Hindu thought went westwards long before the birth of Christ; and Greek philosophy, at its touch, put forth new flowers of shining radiance and new fruits of exquisite sweetness. The philosophic depth and ecstacy of Neo-Platonism had a Hindu source. The idea of incarnation travelled all over the world from the banks of the Ganges. If only the world had understood and accepted the doctrines of reincarnation and karma and immanence and communion—as it is increasingly doing to-day—how much more of kindness and compassion to all life and charity and love and good-will among men would have prevailed in the world! Later on the fierce virility of Islam felt that gentle and chastening and transforming touch of Hindu thought and utterance. Hindu mathematics and other sciences went in the camp of Islam into Europe and shook and civilised Europe into new and vigorous life. This is not all. When the West came to India on its mission of conquest, no one could foresee how the inner conquests would be. The discovery of Sans-

krit has led to a greater renaissance in the West than that far-famed renaissance which gave to the West in the fifteenth century a new interest in life, a new sense of beauty, a new realisation of values, and a new confidence and culture. Oriental scholars and studies came to prominence in the West. Sakuntala charmed and fascinated the mind of the foremost poet of the modern age—Goethe. Sanskrit grammar and literature have revealed unknown affinities of distant races and tongues and brought new charity and mutual good will into universal life. Even the missionaries of the Christian faith who came to convert remained to learn and love. The Bhagavad Gita became one of the Bibles of humanity and unconsciously influenced modern Western thought and came out in precious words of golden wisdom in Carlyle and Emerson. The modern transcendental philosophy—and especially the philosophy of Schopenhauer—is a bright and brilliant offshoot of Hindu thought. If we pick out the direct references to India and Hindu thought in the English literature and the other literatures of the West and if we trace also the silent and unconscious and even unacknowledged influence of Hindu culture on the universal culture at large, we are sure to have all the

materials for writing a history which will be of perennial beauty and value by its combination of perfect truth and romantic charm.

Nor have the foreign debts of Hindu culture been small. I have already referred to the influence of Islamic and European culture upon it, even before these Hellenic and Roman cultures influenced it, though only to a slight extent. At least some developments in astronomy and art came from that direction. This little book is not a suitable place to go into a detailed discussion of these aspects of our subject. These must be taken up for separate discussion by a band of scholars so as to trace clearly the evolution of Hindu culture.

The foolish phrase about the unchanging East, so glibly uttered and circulated, must vanish out of minds and books. Hindu culture has never been, is not, and will never be isolated. It will not move out of its centre and become changed beyond recognition, as other cultures have done, are doing, and will do. It is too deeply rooted in God to do that. But it has always been a free taker and a freer giver. It has been always full of vitality and vigour. Swami Vivekananda has well said about the mission of Indian thought to-day: "The whole of the Western world is on a volcano which

may burst to-morrow, go to pieces to-morrow. They have searched every corner of the world and have found no respite: They have drunk deep of the cup of pleasure and have found it vanity. Now is the time to work for India's spiritual ideas penetrating deep into the West. Therefore, you young men of India, I specially ask you to remember this: "We must go out, we must conquer the world through our spirituality and philosophy. There is no other alternative; we must do it or die. The only condition of national life, of awakened and vigorous national life, is the conquest of the world by Indian thought".

CHAPTER VIII

THE SHASTRAS

THE Shastras are the sacred books giving to us a clear analysis of the world of nature and the world of human conduct for the purpose of leading us through discipline and love and knowledge to God-love and God-realisation. The Gita says:

Yô sàstravidhimutsrijya varthathé kàmakára [thath ||
Na sa sidhim avapnóthi na sukham na parâm [gathim ||
Thasmat sastram pramánam te kàryákàrya vyav- [asthithau ||
Jnâthvâ sàstravidhánoktam karma kartum i [harhasi ||

(They who give up the injunctions of the Shastras and obey the dictates of passion, do not attain the true fulfilment of life or happiness here or the highest good hereafter. Therefore, the Shastra is thy guide to know what should be done and what should be refrained from. After knowing what the Shastra ordains, do thy duty).

The modern tendency in India is to condemn or neglect the Shastras and either show a mock reverence to them and call them too high for us and put them by or declare them to be too low and the products of a less refined civilisation and then reject them. This double method of damning with excessive praise and with excessive condemnation is equally productive of irreverence and evil. The *Shastra* is the pivot of Hindu Culture and it is therefore meet and proper that we should take it up for primary though brief consideration.

Mr. S. C. Mookerjee declares on page 9 of his book " that the foundation, rise and fall of nations and Empires vary in proportion to their adherence to or departure from that Dharma ". Admirable and admirably stated! But what is the Shastra that he is thinking of as the revealer of Dharma! Probably his own illumined mind! To him and to many others of his type and temperament, the Shastra is but " soulless sacerdotalism ". He informs us, out of the abundance of his knowledge, that in the early times in India there was low sexual morality, that flesh and liquor were taken in abundance, that there was 'nationalisation of women' and that the Mongolian blood " makes itself visible quite unexpectedly in the best and

purest of Brahmin families". All this rigmarole deserves no comment or criticism or consideration. But it shows a certain intellectual tendency which is by no means rare or sporadic in educated India to-day. He tells us that Devata does not mean God! That is his scholarship—a possession in which he has many compeers in this land.

Another theory about the Shastras is the wonderful theory of interpolation. This is the third pit dug for them. Mr. S. C. Mookerjee—whom I am taking merely as typical of a certain frequent mental phenomenon in modern India—speaks of "our alleged Shastras the fabricated and forged interpolations whereof are well-known but nevertheless doggedly adhered to as genuine". This third attitude is the worst of all. The theory of interpolation is so subtle and so personal that it can be easily alleged and can hardly be disproved. It covers syllables and chapters with equal ease and efficacy. It gives its propounder the mental satisfaction of being an autocrat of the breakfast table laying down the law for his betters!

Another favourite expression is that the Hindu is "text-bound". The Hindu is expected at once to rise up and burn his text to

vindicate his right to be called a free man by his critic. So the critic's good opinion is to be of greater value than God's approval! It is indeed impossible to find anything more ridiculous than this modern tyranny of phrase. Are we to become "phrase-bound" to please our critics?

Some neo-scholars bring a new form of scholarship to bear upon this problem. They say that because there was a Vridha Manu as well, the well-known Manu Smrithi as it now exists is a cunning and recent edition intended to enslave the Hindu mind! The word "re-action" is brought in with a great deal of drum-beat of pseudo-scholarship and flourished over our heads. When you ask for proof, proof there is none—except the *ipse dixit* of some captious scoffer or reviling critic.

Not satisfied with these stupendous achievements, Mr. S. C. Mookerjee leads a crusade against the Ramayana and Mahabharata. His blind audacity is equalled only by his blissful ignorance. Rama is first vanquished by this new hero of the new age. The Uttara Kanda is affirmed by him to be an interpolation. He discovers further by some unknown and mysterious mental process that Rama and Lakshmana were bad brothers and have been the

cause of "the innumerable partition suits of ancestral homesteads which are annually filed in the High Court and in the mofussil courts"! Last but not least is his discovery that "the whole of the Ramayana had been edited by a Shakti worshipper". His discoveries about the Mahabharata are equally wonderful. But I have no time or space here to describe the feats of this mental acrobat who has many compeers and parallels in modern educated Hindu society.

It is hence necessary to know the place of the Shastras in Hindu culture, as true and loyal Hindus understand the same. Dissidents and rebels make their own hearts their scriptures. But we are not concerned with them. To us it is clear that the Shastras represent the chart of life as given to us by God and God-inspired men. Their greatness consists in their injunctions about conduct by which the soul can be purified so as to behold the face of God. Professions may vary with the variations of scientific knowledge and political events. But conduct cannot fluctuate on account of these. Those touch but the fringe of life; but this touches the very centre of life. Those affect our temporary relations; this affects our permanent relations. Those are in

a state of constant flux and reflux; this is eternal and goes from birth to birth till it blossoms in God-love and God-realisation.

Even from a social point of view, can we not realise that they are the only real bond of essential unity in India? In this continental land we have every variety of custom and language, all possible variations of manners and methods. Unity can be attained in a vital way not by the importing of the English language nor even by a political assemblage on a new and modern model. It can be reattained and preserved only by the realisation of our cultural unity by a common obedience to our scriptures.

After all who dares affirm that he has got a higher standard of personal morality than that revealed to us by our Shastras! There is no higher conception of personal purity, domestic virtue and affection, civic duty, and social and political solidarity than that which is found in them. Pettiness may revile them; critical arrogance may look down upon them. But the majority of the Hindus whose opinions alone count in this matter know their duty and their loyalty too well to heed the intellectual seductions of the blind agnostic and the blinder rationalist. They know the harmony of real reason

and real revelation and the absolute indispensableness of Shastraic conduct for happiness here and hereafter.

CHAPTER IX

HINDU MARRIAGE

THE new-found freedom of to-day is chafing against the wholesome restraints and disciplines of the Hindu marriage system. The issues are presented in other forms and under other names on many a field of debate and discussion. But this is the real secret of the struggle. The Time-spirit and Truth are struggling for mastery like Ahriman and Ahuramazda, and we must not only await and see the issue of the conflict in a spirit of utter detachment but must take part in the struggle, because in times of vital danger apathy is even worse than revolt and he that is not with us is really against us.

Mr. S. C. Mookerjee, in one of his many heroic moods, tells us in his venomous book: "It discloses an artificial, automatic, soulless, loveless system on the basis of which the whole Hindu society's angle of vision of the subject of love and marriage has been corrupted and diverted to the eternal detriment of women's honour. The offspring thus begotten without love must be lacking in physical vigour and in

various mental and psychic forces, necessary alike for the upbuilding of character in the manhood and womanhood of the race". This is a fair sample of the many specious untruths which are sedulously circulated about the Hindu ideal of marriage.

Indeed, if freedom is to be the judge, it will proclaim marriage itself to be soulless, artificial, automatic, and loveless. Love should be free to come and to go. Unions must be based on love, and when love disappears union must come to an end. Some free thinkers have even advocated probationary marriages, trial marriages, marriages for a term, marriages dissoluble at will, etc. Are we to barter away our soul's eternal good for the sake of pleasing these loquacious and noisy free thinkers?

Love is the most wonderful thing in the world, not only because of its sweetness, but also and mainly because of its being a blossom of self-restraint and not of self-indulgence. It is the fierce seeker of love through the gate of the body and the senses that most often fails to secure it. Love is like joy in that both of them are God's gifts to the pure in heart and the disciplined in mind and cannot be wrested from His hands and cannot be attained by mere post-puberty choice of attractive and attracted eyes.

In the Ramayana the immortal poet-saint sings:

Priyá thu Sita Ramasya Darah Pitrukritah Ithi ||
Gunad rupagunastchapi Preethir bhuyobhyavar-
[dhatha ||
Tasyascha bhartha dvigunam hridaye parivar-
[thathee ||
Antargathamapi vyaktham âkhyathi hridayam
[hrida ||

(Sita was dear to Rama as she was his father's precious gift to him. Their love grew and grew because of their noble natures and of their noble loveliness. In her heart her lord was imaged with enhanced perfections. Each heart though hidden by the frame spoke clearly to the other.)

These verses express in a fine and felicitous form a great fact of experience which cannot be gainsaid by freedom's rigmaroles and rhodomontades embellished by flowers of rhetorical speech.

The Hindu theory of marriage is in harmony with the Hindu practice of marriage and both are in consonance with the Hindu ideals of life before and here and hereafter. Ante-natal relations bring embodied souls together. Marriage is not merely for physical enjoyment or for giving to the state warriors and statesmen and

merchants and labourers. It is an effect, a continuation, a discipline, a forecast, a fulfilment, a guide to the fulness of divine love. The supreme example of love and faithfulness, the bold interrogator of Death, the peerless vindicator of love's power of triumphing over Death, Savitri is a standing witness in proof of the rationality, sanity, sweetness and felicity of the Hindu marriage system.

Can we not realise after this the utter blasphemy of Mr. S. C. Mookerjee's silly description about "the shame and infamy of their deflowerment, ravishment, under the license of that Sanatan Hindu marriage". This is indeed too silly for words. He grows even poetic when he says that "the caged bird's perpetual caresses can never be comparable with the moment's touch of a wild free bird." At once he drops into the bathos of being "vulnerable to the first wink of a bazaar woman". The whole description is as sickening as it is false. Our ideal and practice of pre-puberty marriages, our ideals of feminine modesty and purity, and our keen sense of the bearing of marital purity on the generations that have gone before us and that are to come after us have been the result of our unwavering loyalty to God's word through the ages, and

we cannot and will not sacrifice them at the altar of new phrases and shibboleths and maudlin enthusiasms.

Let me say a few words here about some of the stock arguments against the Hindu system of marriage. The Hindu ideal of pre-puberty marriage makes for delicacy in the relations between the sexes, and for the preservation of virginal purity and grace for the caresses of a continent and disciplined and pure husband, and is the only means of intensification of the spiritual aims of life. If to-day there is enfeeblement of the Hindu physique, it is because of lack of Brahmacharya and because of early maternity. The Ayurveda prohibits nuptials before the sixteenth year for girls and the twentyfourth year for boys. But the modern Hindu knows neither science nor religion well. The prohibition of widow marriage was a great ideal which was exacted more from the Brahmin caste than from the other castes. It was based not only on the theory of marriage to which I have already made reference but also on the important fact that the highest examples of self-restraint and self-denial are the only means by which a generally high standard of self-restraint and self-denial becomes easy of acceptance for all. In the case of *Sanyasis* we, from

our limited point of view, think only of their homelessness. But the shifting of the emotional centre to a different and higher plane brings new powers and new joys unknown to our limited vision and limited experience. The prohibition of divorce is based on equally sound views. Freedom of divorce introduces an element of laxity into sexual ideas and is often a predisposing cause to looseness of sexual relations. As Mr. Gerrard says well: "The point is that if divorce is made easy, the inviolability of marriage is no longer sacred. The whole of the female sex becomes a possible sphere of choice for the man with loose ideas and similarly the whole of the male sex for a woman with loose ideas".

This is not the place to expatiate much on these points as my subject is wide and varied and I have to hurry on to other aspects and considerations. Marriage is in fact a discipline, and not an indulgence, in the Hindu world. It has got its code, its laws, its methods, its disciplines, its injunctions of direction and prohibition. Woman, as the keeper of heredity and as the preserver of the type, was asked to preserve an even higher standard of purity and perfection than man. This was not due to any partiality to man but to the application of a

differential rule having regard to the greater ruin to the race from the stepping aside of woman from the straight path of rectitude. Even Mr. S. C. Mookerjee forgets himself and tells us: "All the pride we still may feel for our culture is due to the saintly virtues of our women. When the question is one of race and culture it is the women who count and not men". We can certainly see that it is not men of his type who count when the question is one of race.

Crocodile's tears are being shed in abundance about the Hindu women being household drudges and about their zenana immurement. As a matter of fact they are neither drudges nor slaves. We have always followed a sane and wise middle course in this as in other matters. We must ever prize our golden mean between seclusion and free movement in the case of the fair sex; and we must preserve our reverence for the misunderstood and neglected but universal and vital profession of home-keeping and child-training which can be properly followed only by women, without which all the other professions in the world are worthless and fruitless, and which is the highest and holiest of professions. The payment for such a profession should be in the divine coin of

love and reverence and comfort for which the followers of other professions pant in vain. Woman is the guardian of the emotional and spiritual elements of the race, and the purity of the racial type is committed to her charge. She is the giver of life; she is the real home; she is the efficient helper of man in his ceaseless war of soul with sense; she is the cherished object of affection of the Gods; and she is the nearest and dearest manifestation of the Eternal Love, because her love and selflessness and self-sacrifice dawn even before our birth and surround us with light and warmth till we close our eyes upon the world.

It is thus clear that our ideals of marital choice and duty and honour and felicity are of the essence of our racial type and of our civilisation. Here is a realm of purity which we must ever guard against impurities of every description and from every quarter. We can and will make no compromises or concessions here, whatever else we may have to surrender to the imperious demands of the Time-spirit in the course of its triumphal progress in the modern age.

CHAPTER X

THE HINDU CASTE SYSTEM

THE Hindu caste system as it was meant to be is one thing; the Hindu caste system as it is is a different thing; and the Hindu caste system as it is represented to be is a yet different thing. We can know a thing even better by knowing what it is not than by knowing what it is. A combination of the two methods will prevent all confusion of thought.

The testimony of foreign observers of the caste system even in its present degenerate form has been of a various character. The men of missionary temperament and those who, like Mr. Archer, are full of cultural imperialism and dislike all communities except those communities which like the African communities become slavish imitators of western forms of dress and religion and are content to live apart and afar a low and servile and despised life, have naturally not one good word to say on behalf of it, because it is the main atmosphere of Hindu cultural resistance and keeps the orbit of the progress of Hindu culture unimpeded and free

Just as the atmosphere surrounding the earth not only sustains life but forms a medium of resistance which prevents wandering shooting stars from impinging on the earth and reduces them to powder after a brief though bright career and adds the fine fertilising silt to the surface of the earth, even so does the caste system prevent the incursions of alien faiths and cultures and allow only the really valuable elements to be strained through itself to fall into the general mass of Hindu life to fertilise without injuring it. Let us see what unprejudiced observers from abroad have to say about it. Sir Henry Cotton says about it: "The system of caste, far from being the source of all troubles which can be traced in Hindu society, has rendered most important service in the past, and still continues to sustain order and solidarity. The admirable order of Hinduism is too valuable to be rashly sacrificed before any Moloch of progress. Better is order without progress, if that were possible, than progress with disorder." Mr. Sidney Low says: "There is no doubt that it is the main cause of the fundamental stability and contentment by which Indian society has been braced for centuries against the shocks of politics and the cataclysms of Nature. It provides every man with his

place, his career, his occupation, his circle of friends. It makes him at the outset a member of a corporate body; it protects him through life from the canker of social jealousy and unfulfilled aspirations; it ensures him companionship and a sense of community with others in like case with himself. The caste organization is to the Hindu his club, his trade union, his benefit society, his philanthrophic society. There are no work-houses in India, and none are as yet needed. The obligation to provide for kinsfolk and friends in distress is universally acknowledged; nor can it be questioned that this is due to the recognition of the strength of family ties and of the bonds created by associations and common pursuits which is fostered by the caste principle. An India without caste, as things stand at present, it is not quite easy to imagine". Auguste Comte says about it: "The loss of many useful inventions before the preservative institution of caste arose must have suggested the need of it, and has proved its advantage afterwards in securing the division of labour which was here and there attained. No institution has even shown itself more adapted to honour ability of various kinds than this polytheistic organisation. . . . In a social view the virtues of the system

are not less conspicuous. Politically its chief attribute was stability . . . . . As to the influence on morals this system was favourable to personal morality, and yet more to domestic, for the spirit of caste was a mere extension of the family spirit . . . . As to social morals, the system was evidently favourable to respect for ages and homage to ancestors". Sir George Birdwood has said about it: "The real danger which threatens India is that the caste system may be broken down. That would mean the ruin of India. It would make India the East End of the world". Mr. Farquhar has said recently about it: "We ought also to notice that there is a very large and very serious reason for this permanent attitude of the Hindu to the foundations of Hindu society. The race has been preserved amid the countless military and political changes of India by its faithful adherence to the traditional family and caste life. Of that there can be no question". To go to a slightly older testimony, Abbe Dubois says: "I believe caste division to be in many respects the *chief d'ouvre*, the happiest effort of Hindu legislation. I am persuaded that it is simply and solely due to the distribution of the people into castes, that India did not lapse into a state of barbarism, that she preserved and

perfected the arts and sciences of civilisation, while most other nations of the earth remained in a state of barbarism. . . . Such an institution was probably the only means that the most clear-sighted prudence could devise for maintaining a state of civilisation ".

No one can for a moment defend or praise the innumerable castes or the caste feuds and jealousies as they exist in India to-day. They are a travesty of the real system of caste and not the latter or its legitimate development. They are a source of individual decline and national decay. The counteraction of such evils is, an act of individual duty and of national righteousness.

But the true Hindu caste system has yet to be understood. It has a religious basis and a social manifestation. It is not based on ethnic separateness, because the Hindu race is one and entire and Aryan. It is not due to mere division of labour, because the latter is a fluctuating factor while the former is permanent. It is not the product of designing priestcraft, because great social phenomena are never the result of individual intrigue. After all, when discussing a Hindu institution we must know the Hindu view and not the views of others. According to us, it is the result of a divine

grouping according to actions and tendencies. This does not however mean that everyone in the higher caste is higher than every one in the lower caste or that all men are not equally eligible for salvation. By improvement of environment and education a man born in a so-called lower caste may be far superior to most men in the so-called higher caste. It has reference only to the initial endowment at birth which can be augmented or lessened by social or individual well-doing or ill-doing. All men and women in all castes are equally eligible for salvation. The true Hindu caste system concentrates diffuse and feeble public opinion; it leads to social purity; and it is based on co-ordinated and non-competitive mutual service and combines unity and unanimity with diversity and specialisation. It aims at reaching national unity through group-unity. Its stress is on duties and not on rights.

The Hindu caste system is not to be despised merely because it is old. Old things need not be necessarily bad. Some old things are good and indispensable like the Sun. It has never been opposed to national unity or to patriotism or to progress. Nor is it inconsistent with sane notions of liberty, equality and fraternity.

I have elaborated these ideas elsewhere in my booklets on *The Present Crisis in Hindu Society* and *The Social Problem and The Bhagawad Gita* and must refrain from doing so here because the subject of this work is very wide and forbids disproportionate elaboration of any portion of it.

The fiction of inter-dining and inter-marriage being unifying forces by themselves has been finally exposed by the great world war now happily over. The real and efficient means of unity is to base the communion of men on the higher, and not on the lower centres of life. Interaction, inter-culture, inter-worship are more valuable and powerful than interdining and inter-marriage as forces making for unity. We had them in an abundant measure before and hence no one felt hurt or humiliated by the absence of unfettered interdining and inter-marriage. Which Hindu now honestly works for their re-birth in our beautiful and beloved motherland ?

Thus the Hindu caste system is one of the pivots of Hindu culture. In spite of the fact that many are thundering against it as Cato thundered against Carthage, it has seen many democrats before to-day and is destined to see many democrats hereafter. The causes of its

vitality are its inherent democratic spirit, its spirit of co-ordination, and its religious basis. It has no doubt to be purified and strengthened, and that consummation is sure to come in course of time, because the self-adjusting and self-preservative power of Hindu culture is sure to prevail over all adverse influences owing to the inherent vitality and virility of the Hindu race and to the protective beneficence of the divine upholder and sustainer of Dharma. We must never forget that it has been based on the due realisation of the respective importance of the preservation of race values and of the preservation of the sense of brotherhood. The system of four Varnas and four Ashramas and four Purusharthas is a composite and synthetic system. The Hindu idea of caste has reference to eternal types and disciplines. It has equal reference to the past and the present and the future. Its eye has always been on the ethical development of each individual, in whatever caste he may have been born, so as to discipline him to realise and enjoy the true bliss of life. It provides a tribunal to pay the debt of action and go forth a free soul to God rejoicing in the manumission of the spirit. As Sister Nivedita says well in *The Web of Indian Life*: "Caste is race-continuity; it is the his-

toric sense; it is the dignity of tradition and of purpose for the future. It is even more, it is the familiarity of a whole people in all its grades with the one supreme human motive—the notion of *noblesse oblige.*"

CHAPTER XI

THE HINDU REGULATION OF LIFE

CIVILISATION means respect for mutual rights and for individual freedom to the extent to which it is not opposed to, the freedom of all. Custom is crystallised racial experience and hence no violent changes of it are possible or desirable. This does not mean that with the development of *sattwic* nature there will not be or must not be changes of custom in the direction of greater peace and love and non-injury. In India itself the slow substitution of vegeterianism for flesh diet is an illustration of this. But taken as a whole there can be no safety for the continuity of civilisation unless there are acknowledged and obeyed principles of regulation of social and individual conduct. When these become instinctive and natural, the wheels of social life and individual life run smoothly and well. Lord Haldane has said well in his great address on *Higher Nationality*: "Without such conduct and the restraints which it imposes, there could be no tolerable social life, and real freedom from interference

would not be enjoyed. It is the instinctive sense of what to do and what not to do in daily life and behaviour that is the source of liberty and ease. And it is the instinctive sense of obligation that is the chief foundation of society. Its reality takes objective shape and displays itself in family life and in our other civic and social institutions. It is not limited to any one form and it is capable of manifesting itself in new forms and of developing and changing old forms. Indeed the civil community is more than the political fabric. It includes all the social institutions in and by which the individual life is influenced—such as are the family, the schools, the church, the legislature, and the executive. None of these can subsist in isolation from the rest, together they and other institutions of the kind form an organic whole, the whole of which is known as the nation. The system of ethical habit in a community is of a dominating character, for the decision and influence of the whole community is embodied in that social habit. . . . If this power fails or becomes weak, the community degenerates and may fall to pieces".

This passage, admirably conceived and admirably expressed, shows the real springs of racial energy and distinctiveness. It is by a

realisation of this truth and by the preservation of the central institutions of personal and domestic and social life while allowing slight modifications by way of slow and necessary adjustments to environment that racial life is preserved and perfected from age to age. For this purpose even a certain amount of obstinate resolve to preserve individual habits and social institutions is absolutely necessary. Dr. A. K. Coomaraswami and Sister Nivedita, than whom there have been no sincerer friends of Hindu India, say well: " Ages of accumulation are entrusted to the frail bark of each passing epoch by the hand of the past, desiring to make over its treasures to the use of the future. It takes a certain stubbornness, a doggedness of loyalty, even a modicum of unreasonable conservatism maybe, to lose nothing in the long march of the ages; and even when confronted with great empires, with a sudden extension of the idea of culture, or with the supreme temptation of a new religion, to hold fast what we have, adding to it only as much as we can healthfully and manfully carry ".

The Hindu genius has well realised that if you take care of the day the life will take care of itself. In Hindu India religion has never been a mere matter of an inner seclusion of emotion,

because right emotion is only the blossom of right conduct and it is impossible that the emotion can be right when the conduct is wrong. Thus Dharma is the chart of life given by God to humanity when the cosmos of life was projected into being out of the eternal and infinite Being of God to develop according to the stored-up *Vasanas* gathered in previous cycles. The Hindu's conception of daily duty is thus wisely related to the past and the present and the future and shows both practical and psychological wisdom and a realisation of the real and only means of attaining dispassion and devotion which alone can lead the soul to God-love and God-realisation. As Mr. J. M. Kennedy says well: "Furthermore, the Indian is much more logical than the European in that the theories he holds are his practical ideals of life. Very few Europeans, for example, have ever tried to put into practice the essential principles of the Christian religion which most of them profess to hold. The Indian, on the other hand, is not merely familiar with the chief tenets of his faith, but he endeavours according to his lights to carry them out in his daily life. Again, the organisation of the entire Indian social order is based on philosophical and religious principles, those

principles which are expressed perhaps with the greatest clearness in the collection of writings known to us as the Laws of Manu. But in modern Europe our sociological and economic order has not necessarily anything to do with religion at all, and, in fact, in country after country we have witnessed the separation of the church and state, as if the two things, far from being bound up one with another, were reciprocally hostile."

I do not think it proper or possible to describe here the Hindu daily life of duty and of discipline. I propose to do so elsewhere. If one studies it well, not as it is now found in broken fragments in modern India but as it is to be gathered from Manu and Yajnavalkya and other Dharma Sastras, one will realise its essential beauty and sweetness and wisdom. It makes for individual and social purity, efficiency and harmony. It disciplines the soul through duty to attain devotion. It uses the family and the society and the state for the discipline of the spiritual life of the individual and uses the individual for the betterment of the family and the society and the state. The Hindu doctrine of the *Purusharthas* shows a true balance of nature and a true synthetic vision, a harmony of the here

and the hereafter, a co-ordination of self-control and legitimate enjoyment. The Hindu code of daily life includes early exercise and bath, meditation, *pranayama,* worship, study, discharge of domestic, civic and political duties, legitimate enjoyment, and a strenuous effort to realise God by mounting up the ladder of human life to the life divine. Indeed, Dr. A. K. Coomaraswami says well: "What nevertheless remains as the most conspicuous special character of the Indian culture is the purposive organisation of society in harmony with a definite conception of the meaning and ultimate purpose of life."

CHAPTER XII

MODERN HINDU CULTURE: FACTS AND FICTIONS

IF in the light of the ideas described and discussed above we consider the present position of Hindu Society and Hindu Culture, where do we stand? Have the hastening centuries brought to us gain or loss? Has our manliness of spirit attained development or suffered abatement? It is here that we must guard against excess of pessimistic or optimistic spirit. We must as far as possible balance gain and loss and take a dispassionate view of the situation, because one of the first conditions of progress is a vital synthesis of calm courage and clear vision.

Whether the present tendency in Hindu India is in the direction of real progress must be studied and ascertained. If in any direction our progress is merely fictitious and we have to mend our ways, the fictions must be mercilessly exposed. No fiction can ever help the spirit of man to attain truth. To a large extent we cannot deny that the new education and

enlightenment have only brought into existence three generations of those whom Macaulay well predicted as a "class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect". Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy says: "By their fruits ye shall know them. The most crushing indictment of this Education is the fact that it destroys, in the great majority of those upon whom it is inflicted, all capacity for the appreciation of Indian culture". The struggle for existence is becoming keener every day and individual ambition and restlessness, and caste and class hatreds and jealousies are on the increase. If the balance sheet of loss and gain is prepared, who can say that the gain will outbalance the loss? The standard of comfort has risen, but no one can say that the standard of happiness has risen. All sorts of new tastes have come in and new passions and ambitions are beginning to show themselves. There is a marked tendency towards physical as well as mental approximation of the Hindu to the European. Cranial adjustments of tresses, facial approximations, and sartorial resemblances to the West, the daily, nay hourly, wooing of Her Ladyship Nicotine, a secret love for strong foods and beverages, western manners and

courtesies, an increasing adoption of the English language, and westernisation of outlook are proceeding apace. Even the womanhood of India has come out into the open and has taken up the valuable work of tilting at windmills.

But are the self-boastful self-congratulations of Neo-India well-deserved? No. Certainly not. The intellectual sterility of modern India, its pitiful inability to contribute new and valuable ideas in the realms of literature and art and science and philosophy and religion, and the general dearth of high ideals of culture have made modern India a byword among the races of men. Modern Hindu education does not lead men and women to power or happiness. It is getting more and more away from the disciplines of life and the truths of the spirit. The masses of India have the benefits neither of the new secular culture nor of the old spiritual culture. Education has ceased to make men; it has been manufacturing only clerks and lawyers waging a lifelong war against disease.

From the point of view of social efficiency and harmony and ethical betterment, the less said the better. That social harmony is on the wane is being recognised even by the most self-deluded applauders of modern progress in

India. We have, no doubt, not yet arrived at Bolshevism. But many steps in that direction are being blindly taken. The industrial and political condition of India is still on a low level. The ancient habits of self-discipline and self-control are also slowly ceasing to be. Plain living and high thinking are no more. India, which was always known as the land of charity, is slowly becoming unlike her old self. The modern Hindu is chafing more and more against the ethical necessities and restraints of the joint family system. Litigation is on the increase. Piety is on the decrease. Who that has considered all these facts and has grieved over them can hug to himself the illusion of ethical betterment and social efficiency and harmony and advance in modern Hindu India?

In regard to art and literature, the situation was depressing but is now looking up a little. The ancient power of beautiful design in metal work and wood carving is becoming a thing of the past. Even the secrets of image-making and sculpture and architecture are fast becoming things unknown. Cheap foreign things, not merely in the world of use but also in the world of beauty, have not merely supplanted fine workmanship but are bringing about the disappearance of fine taste in the artists and in

the people. Nay, worse, the Indian mind seems to be moving in the direction of a growing belief that political and economic work alone can achieve the regeneration of India, forgetting that if even in one generation art and literature and philosophy and religion are neglected the continuity of tradition and development would be gone beyond recall. We want not only keen vision but synthetic vision. The pitiable spectacle that we witness to-day is that literature, like life, is becoming more and more westernised. Masculine free love and feminine revolt against the ancient restraints making for honour and delicacy and modesty are being increasingly depicted in the third-rate vernacular works of fiction which are being largely published everywhere. They are a sign, a symptom, and an incitement. The gramophone and the harmonium have come, but the ancient mastery of the subtly-modulated human voice and of the subtly-responsive musical instruments like the *Vina* is becoming less and less. As in the West, so in India, statistics threaten to take the place of an interest in living things. This is not all. Indian dress—and especially Hindu dress—is undergoing strange transformations. Sir George Birdwood advised some time ago that "Indian native gentlemen and ladies

should make it a point of culture never to wear any clothing or ornaments but of native manufacture and strictly native design". Who has cared for this wholesome advice? Changes of food and dress have unfortunately—we will not pause to enquire why—come to be connected with professional advancement, official preferment and successful political place-hunting, and are hence proceeding apace. These new habits have not only vulgarised life and taste but have also killed our domestic handicrafts. Such has been the fate of fine and decorative and industrial arts and of literature in modern Hindu India.

After we realise this, the fate of philosophy and religion in modern Hindu India goes without saying. When the leaders of Hindu society do not understand the one and have practically given up the observances and even lost the spirit of the other, what other result can we expect? Hindu education is quite out of relation to both. One such generation is enough to work irreparable mischief. Three such generations have come and gone. Even amidst the vicissitudes and turmoils of political invasions and incursions we kept the flame of philosophic thought and divine love alive on the altars of our minds and hearts. But what

the fierce gusts of extinguishing invasions could not blow out, a slight breath from the cynical and cruel mouth of neglect has extinguished. The habit of philosophic study and discussion and of hearing the same is a decreasing factor in life. The Bhajana movement which was revived again and again to save and sweeten our souls in times of seeming adversity is now moribund in times of seeming prosperity and progress.

Some of my brothren and compatriots may not like this picture. They may even call it overdrawn. But I beg leave to differ from them. I am stating here only what I have seen and felt. There are however a few redeeming features on which alone I rely as holding out a promise of better times. They are to be found not in the protestant or cosmopolitan social and religious movements which have been in vogue—though it is a lessening vogue—for some decades past, but elsewhere and in other tendencies and movements. The West has brought into India a new and powerful feeling of faith in science and love for scientific study and methods and investigations. Though as yet much has not been done in this direction, a beginning has been made and the promise is hopeful. The names of Sir Jagadis Chunder Bose and Sir P.

C. Ray and S. Ramanujam have become well known in the West as well as in the East and show the possibilities of science in India. The historical and comparative method is resorted to largely by the Indian scholars for studying Indian social and artistic phenomena and this application of a great western instrument of thought is sure to be productive of great results, provided it be not extended to realms of thought absolutely unsuitable to it. The new-born national feeling is only an intenser and wider application of an ancient emotion and is full of immense possibilities. The new democratic spirit that is giving a new turn to universal life is in active sway here also and will bring into existence a more intimate sense of brotherhood and a more vivid sense of mutual interdependence, provided it is realised in due subordination to racial, social and spiritual ideals. Collective charity is taking new and fruitful forms and rising to the height of the new needs and the new opportunities of the new and strenuous civilisation which is being built up in India. Movements like the Sri Ramakrishna Mission show that the religious spirit in India can be loyal to the ancient life of disciplined duty and devotion and at the same time full of the modern passion

of pity and the joy of social service and social emancipation.

On the whole, the outlook is one of courage and hope, though wary walking and circumspection are absolutely necessary. Hindu culture is neither moribund nor exhausted. It has always been full of irrepressible vitality as it has been always in touch with the Eternal Source of life. Tagore's poetry and the new art movement in Bengal, the Sri Ramakrishna movement, the religious movements in Southern India, the general dawn of a new and radiant national self-consciousness, and the pervasive feeling of re-attained power are the best proofs of the inherent vitality of Hindu culture and of the great truth that we are in the midst of a great Hindu renaissance.

CHAPTER XIII

HINDU RENAISSANCE

SIR William Wilson Hunter in his book *The India of the Queen* says: "As at the Revival of Learning in Europe, so at all times and in all lands, a great human movement advances not in one, but in many directions. In India we see it take an industrial direction, we see it take an intellectual direction, we see it take a political direction, we see it take a religious direction, we see it rush into a hundred social and domestic channels. You cannot let loose the mighty waters of knowledge, and then command them to flow only in one narrow course. We have thrown open the floodgates of a new moral and intellectual life in India. The result is a new energy which is making itself felt in every department of human effort in India".

This excellent passage well sums up the great characteristic of the new movement in India to-day. It shows not only the vitality of the new movement but also its synthetic and composite character. It shows also the need for sustained and continuous and energetic and

enthusiastic work in all directions, because a nation grows into greatness and power and becomes beloved of the gods, not by over-emphasis on this or that aspect of cultural life, but by an equal and full attention to all the vital and valuable elements of national cultural life.

The idea of *renascence* or *renaissance* may, taken by itself, be assumed to imply a previous decrepitude, decay, or death. But this is not necessarily so. Nothing dead is re-born as the same entity. The term renaissance is used to indicate a new temper, a new attitude, a new aspiration, a new striving, a new realisation. In each culture there are the periods of idea, realisation, and disintegration. If an inner impulse of self-renewal comes with power and success, disintegration is interrupted and is transformed into new and vigorous and youthful life. In the case of social and communal and racial life, there is no natural and necessary interruption of life by death. This is one important respect in which racial life differs from individual life. In the case of individual life, the poet's words irresistibly and inevitably apply:

> "The moving finger writes; and having [writ
> Moves on; nor all your piety nor wit

Can lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your tears wash out one word of it".

But in the case of racial life there is a possibility of perpetual self-renewal. There is no doubt an equal possibility of racial suicide as well. If the ethical basis of life is preserved and perfected, if the fund of altruism does not become bankrupt but increases in fulness and beneficence and if the racial ideals are preserved, there is every certainty of the race living full of youthful vigour and having the dower of eternal life.

The Hindu Renaissance is quite unlike the Italian Renaissance, and is different in many respects from the Irish Renaissance, though like it in some respects. The Italian Renaissance owed its inspiration to a different land and to a dead literature. Here the inspiration has come from a living land and a living literature —and these our own. J. A. Symonds said well in regard to the renaissance in the West: "The history of the Renaissance is the history of the attainment of the self-conscious freedom by the human spirit manifested in the European races. What the word really means is a new birth to liberty, the spirit of mankind recovering consciousness and the spirit of self-determination, recognising the

beauty of the outer world and of the body through art, liberating the reason in science and the conscience in religion, restoring culture to the intelligence and establishing the principle of political freedom". All these great characteristics are seen to be an integral manifestation of the spirit of Hindu renaissance as well. But there are more. The Celtic Renaissance has been born as a reincarnation of an ancient spirit of beauty in the new body of modernity. The Hindu Renaissance resembles it in this respect. But it is more than both. It is the rebirth or rather re-intensification of the Hindu consciousness in all its differential planes of greatness, consistently with the acquisition of the modern mastery over nature and the modern efficiency of social and political organisation.

To understand fully the significance of the Hindu Renaissance, we must realise fully the mission of the Hindu consciousness. I have already described this in some measure. To realise that mission fully, we must realise the power of imagination, emotional refinement, spiritual insight and rapture and meditative passion of the Hindu mind, and the great Hindu message of the unity and divine purpose of life, of divine immanence, of the sovereignty of love,

of the spiritual kinship of all, of *Ahimsa,* of *Santhi,* of universal toleration and of the love of God being the crowning glory of life. Its aim in individual and personal life is to discipline the soul through duty and dispassion and devotion to behold God. Its aim in social life is to achieve unity in diversity and to preserve equilibrium and efficiency by co-ordination and co-operation and mutual service. Its aim in art is not realistic presentation of natural beauty alone but the intuitive realisation and representation and revelation of the inner and essential beauty. Its aim in literature is to use beauty as a door to spiritual realisation. Its aim in philosophy and religion is to show the unchanging and eternal light of which the changing fleeting world is a shadow and a reflection.

It is when we realise this great truth that we begin to realise the true significance and the true lines of England's real work in India. The Western thirst for practical and scientific knowledge has only re-awakened an old desire and an old power. The Western ideals of democracy have only re-awakened and re-stirred the inherent spirit of brotherhood and the ancient movements for its vivid and practical realisation in daily life. The Western spirit of

nationalism has only reawakened the ancient passionate sense of the unity and the uniqueness of our land and our culture. England has thrown over us the shield of outer protection to enable our perfect inner growth to be achieved-quickly and well. England—the champion of freedom, the emancipator of slaves, the protector of small states and treaty obligations has brought to us the gifts of a rational study of nature and her puzzles and her problems and her powers, the historical method, a vibrant and energetic national feeling and spirit, lofty ideals of civic life and citizenship and patriotism, political genius, and ever-broadening liberal and constitutional government.

The most noteworthy and hopeful and satisfactory feature about the Hindu Renaissance is that the assimilations and reawakenings now going on in our midst, whether seen or unseen, have begun with a conscious, and strenuous and sustained effort on the part of the Hindu consciousness to recover her spirituality and sense of beauty. She is trying to base the new life on her intensified sense of individual, social and national righteousness. The paths of duty and wisdom and love are being trod again. The reflow of the national consciousness in religion and art is the best

guarantee that the new life will be our immemorial racial life with a new beauty and a new power. Our beautiful land promises to become once again the mother of religious thought and emotion and the highest university of spiritual culture.

It is as an aspect of this Hindu Renaissance that the recent and prominent Bengali Renaissance possesses real interest and value. The poetry of Tagore, the achievements of the new Bengal school of painting, the religious movement of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda, the scientific achievements of Bose and Ray, and the new efflorescence of national feeling in Bengal show how the energy that has re-awakened all over India has found an early manifestation in Bengal. To Bengal has been given the great privilege of being the first workshop of the reawakened Bhârata Sakti. The duty of the Hindu race is to achieve a similar, and an even better, record of work everywhere to give a true fulfilment to the new spirit.

We must also look at the Hindu Renaissance as an integral portion of the Indian Renaissance as a whole and in its bearing on universal culture. The races inhabiting India have recognised their unity in diversity and

their oneness as the children of a common mother. The Hindu Renaissance must grow in beauty and power and distinctiveness but must set itself in harmony to the development of other cultures in our land. India's rich power of synthesis is her best aid in this direction. She will also through her influence on England influence the cultures of the world. England will teach India the new art of democratic citizenship. India will convey to her the art of life. England will instruct India in the art of outer peace and achievement in the realms of political life and action; India will convey to her the arts of social co-operation and of inner peace and achievement in the heaven of the soul. It is for this work and for this result that the great travail of the spirit of humanity is going on. Despite deflections and meanderings, that is the real and imperious urge of the human spirit. Then and then only will come the ultimate and supreme perfection and fulfilment of the Hindu Renaissance.

CHAPTER XIV

HINDU CULTURE AND THE NEW AGE

SIR John Woodroffe points out in his valuable book *Is India Civilised* that human evolution has three stages—the stage of conflict, the stage of concert, and the stage of sacrifice. We are now in the stage of conflict all over the world. Hence India must defend her culture in the tremendous cultural conflicts of the present and the future. Upon the skill and power and success of her defence depends not only her welfare, nay, her very existence, but also the existence and welfare of the higher elements of culture all over the world.

Let no one forget, even for a moment, the lesson that is being taught every day and all over the earth in the bitter school of experience. Mankind as a whole has not yet emerged from the *Râjasic* or murderously active condition of mutual and destructive struggle, despite the songs of the poets and the declarations and admonitions of sages and saints. Even the

great world war now happily over has simply followed in the wake of the lesser wars of the past in creating a feeling of disgust only during the period of suffering—followed by a feeling of jubilation on the one side and a feeling of muffled resentment on the other. The truly and triumphantly *sàttwic* temperament must hence intensify power and peace at the same time and must educate the world into a *sàttwic* condition by possessing power and by practising and preaching and enforcing peace.

The New Age is tired of the fictions and falsehoods of yesterday. The peace of the Nineteenth century meant the armed peace of the strong races and the dumb disarmed peace of the weak races. The passions of conquest and exploitation which were freely indulged in by all the European races burst in a thunder-storm over their own heads in the recent world-war. Even now the illusion of strength of arms and armaments has not gone. The worship of force is still a widely prevalent cult everywhere. Very soon this evil will exhibit itself not only in international conflicts but in internal conflicts as well. Hate begets hate; war begets war. No armies or navies have ever overthrown the tyrannies of desire.

Such has been the course of the devastations

of ambition and avarice ever since the dawn of time. The resulting ambition of the strong is ended only by suicidal actions or by fractricidal strife. No changes of line or colour in the political map of the world can defer or avoid the slow but sure distributions of evil ambition. No sophistries of diplomacy or administration can weigh in the councils of God.

This is the feeling that like a surging tidal wave is sweeping over the ocean of the mental and moral life of humanity. There cannot be one law for the individual and another law for the nation. Love cannot claim the individual life alone, leaving the infinitely more spacious realm of national life and international life to the sovereignty of hate. The nations must feel and act as individuals in the human family. Patriotism should display itself only in diverseness of national self-realisation, not in destructive national self-realisation.

The fact must be realised by all individuals and nations that freedom is as much a primary need and a common possession as air, light, water, and food. It must be recognised that liberty can be realised best by giving it in abundance to others, just as knowledge becomes greater and richer by its free and measureless gift.

A hidden knowledge becomes so corrupt that it leads to inner corruption. The concealed secrets of science lead to self-slaying murderous inventions. In the same manner freedom won but not shared generates an inner enslavement to passion and ambition that brings its own bitter harvests of suffering sooner or later.

The pathway of Time is strewn with dead empires. Each new empire inflated by hate thinks itself immortal. But its own evil passions very soon lay it low. Humanity is being taught in the school of suffering that the ideal of power must be replaced by the ideal of peace and the ideal of domination by the ideal of service. Peace will come, not as the result of treaties and alliances and *ententes*, but as an imperious inner urge born of love.

Here is a great opportunity for India which is the very soul of Asia and therefore the soul of the world. Asia is the mother of religions. India is the divine mother of Spirituality of which all religions are but manifestations. This higher law and light and love have to be reborn to save men. Where can this true glory take its birth, if not in India? *Ex Oriente Lux.* It is the stirring of the new spirit that is being seen in Asia and especially in India. India has a great duty towards the new Age. She has to

electrify the mind of humanity with her electric current of spiritual love. When that is done a new peace and enlightenment will dawn over the world. Democracy will cease to be the tyranny of majority and will become the co-operation of all. The League of Nations will cease to be a league of big nations and will become a fraternity of all nations. True liberty, equality and fraternity will begin to shine everywhere.

Thus India has to teach the world to preserve racial destinctiveness and banish racial domination. Races must and will remain; but racialism must go. When the new spirit comes, the White Man's Burden—whatever it may mean —will fall from his burdened shoulders. Regenerated India can and will and shall regenerate the world. For this a great and imperious call is made upon her by the world. She has to train and discipline herself for her new duties and heroisms and achievements. She has to increase and intensify her simplicity of life and her spirituality of outlook. She has to remain a great agricultural country and limit her manufacturing enterprises to her own needs. If she complicates her life and increases her wants, she will fall back beaten in the remorseless arena of conflict and can help neither herself nor the world. She must have

as her allies peace and intensive agriculture and not war and intensive industry. She must attain and teach the mind-liberating composure of spirit in the place of the nerve-shattering strenuousness of worldliness. It is in these directions that her future work and her opportunities lie; and now is the best time for this imperative effort.

While it is true the British rule has brought us the impact of modern civilisation, it has at the same time saved us from being overborne by the rush of modern civilisation which was inevitable. Ever since the triumphs of democracy and science began in Europe, western civilisation entered on a new and militant stage and began its unchecked career of conquest all over the world. In course of time its tidal waves were bound to have reached and submerged India as well. England's intervention has, while bringing us into touch with modern civilisation, prevented its rough grip upon us in all its relentless strength. Further, the political condition of India was such as to require a strong protecting arm which could and would put down internecine strife. It was by this twofold work that India was enabled to overcome forces of disruption within and of assault without. Though gratitude should never be

thrown away on unworthy objects, a little reflection can convince us that we have been enabled by England to preserve our ancient culture and to assimilate modern culture in a harmonious and thoroughly efficient manner.

The negations and agnosticisms of the New Age have not overborne Hindu religion and culture; but, on the other hand, these show a newer and more vigorous life. This is the most important and significant and hopeful of the events of the present era when Hindu culture has come into vital touch with the new age. It has accepted from the new age a new practical desire for social and political unity and consolidation, a scientific temper, and a love of freedom. But it still retains its love for social co-operation and harmony, its religious passion, and its knowledge of inner and outer discipline. Herein lies its safety and the safety of the ethical and spiritual life of the world.

Though modern worshippers of phrases and shibboleths glibly and superciliously use the word *theocracy* borrowed from Comte to characterise Hindu culture, Hindu India alone has shown to the world how a race could be culturally spiritual and modern at the same time. At the same time such phrase-worshippers will do well to ponder over the unique fact

that "theocratic" India lives while democratic Greece and Imperial Rome have run their courses of glory and have set for ever.

This truth is partly a warning and partly a prophecy. There are tendencies in modern Hindu India which show that in some sections —especially in the so-called 'educated' section—there have come a new thirst for pleasure and power, a new sense of irritation at social and spiritual restraints, and a new passion of revolt against discipline. If these impulses— so dangerous and so un-Hindu—are not checked in time and are allowed to grow and fulfil themselves, the most disastrous consequences are sure to be visited on Hindu culture. If they are checked in time and if proper reconstruction of Hindu culture is made so as to achieve a harmonious combination of self-preservation and adjustment to modernity, then will dawn a new era of power and peace and perfection for Hindu culture. On the whole there is no need for despair. There is yet hope— hope full of vibrant faith in the future and trust in God. Hindu culture has yet its power of absorption and reaction and will right itself and move on along its predestined path.

Here, then, is the secret of the only safe, vital and beneficial contact of Hindu culture

and the New Age. Hindu India must embark on a new career of spiritualising the world lest it should itself be materialised by the world at large. At the same time in the realms of science, commerce and administration, we must learn from the West and organise ourselves. As Sister Nivedita says well: "To give a religion to the world may be a sufficient proof that one's past was not in vain, but evidently it is no sort of safeguard for the future". An undefended culture is a dead culture. What is worth having is worth defending and must be defended. It is, hence, of the most urgent importance to turn our attention to this great and heroic task of adjusting our ancient culture to the New Age by deciding on and achieving the proper and indispensable reconstructions of Hindu culture.

CHAPTER XV

RECONSTRUCTION OF HINDU CULTURE

THIS is the great task of to-day and to-morrow—to preserve the basis of our culture, to adjust it to the New Age, and to make it a dynamic and powerful factor in universal culture once again. We must give up our present policy—or rather impolicy—of drift and begin our dream and realisation of a purposive and constructive programme. All endeavours in this direction are welcome, but the Hindu race must balance and prove all things and hold fast to that which is good for its own self-preservation and progress, without being carried away by glitter of phrase and rhetorical appeals.

What is required first and foremost is a reconstruction of personal character. Without it every other effort will be of no avail and is foredoomed to failure. It is precisely in this direction that laxity and lack of control are sure to appear. The Hindu has been always a man of discipline and devotion and to the extent to

which these great qualities become less, to that extent he becomes the less a Hindu. It is not blind orthodoxy or militant heterodoxy that will save our race, but a disciplined devotion to the highest personal, social and spiritual ideals of the race.

The reconstruction of the Hindu home is an equally urgent task. For this a clear realisation of the Hindu home, its peace, loveliness, discipline, serenity and sanctity is absolutely necessary. The centre of the home is the mother. It is she that keeps God's love sweet in the hearts of all. Her refinements of peace soothe the aged, calm the turbulent, inspire the pure, and instruct the young. Which Hindu has not felt in the moments of utter grief and pain and loneliness and travail of spirit that come to all in this vale of tears that his mother's smile and loving look have been to him not only a solace but a blessing and a benediction? It is her self-dedicatedness that makes us realise what divine love can be and can do for humanity. Woman as wife is equally, if less visibly, revered. He who talks of ignorance and immurement in connection with the ideal Hindu wife is a charlatan and a fool. She is the preserver of the sanctities and graces of the family life which itself is an open door to the sanctities and

graces of the spiritual life. Hers is the privilege, not of equality with her husband but of something far better—of passionate worship. The man receives the worship, not as one worthy of it, but in utter humility of spirit and with a feeling of passionate gratitude. He adores the manifestation of divine tenderness in her and becomes purified and elevated by that uplifting emotion. He may not rise when a woman enters or walk with her arm in arm or open the door through which she is about to pass or hold the cloak ready for her to wear. This is not the only summation of reverence. She is his Lakshmi, the revelation of divine tenderness veiled in the radiant form of womanhood. The Hindu woman may not have the same power of self-protection that her sister in the West may possess. But her need of protection is at once man's opportunity, his privilege, his discipline, and his delight. Well did Sir Andrew Wingate declare recently: "I believe the men of India would have long ago been lost had it not been for the noble womanhood of India".

This is not all. The Hindu home implies also the fraternal love implied in joint families and the reverential love that is always shown to the father and that comes back to the

children in a rich measure of protective and guiding love. The new dislike of large and joint families is a danger and a disaster. Mr. J. J. Gerrard says well: "The prevalence of small families tends towards degeneration". Another beautiful feature of Hindu domestic life is reverence towards elders and towards men of God-love and God-realisation and men who are the embodiments of philosophic and religious learning. This trait is in danger of slow strangulation by pseudo-freedom and self-assertion. The tenderness towards animal life and the free flow of hospitality are other beautiful characteristics. The reverence for the cow is so much more beautiful than the western squandering of affection on the dog and the cat. How do we stand in the matter of protection and love of cows now? I shudder to tell the truth—it is so noxious and disgusting to conceive or to tell. In all these respects we must begin and begin at once, a conscious, sustained, energetic and passionate reconstruction.

Equally important is social reconstruction. The innumerable and warring castes of the Hindu race should be re-unified into the four great and harmonious castes of ancient India. Marriage has once again to become a

sacrament in idea, in fact and in result. We must preserve and retain all our healthy national customs in respect of food, dress, deportment, personal habits and social intercourse. We must do practical work in the direction of elevating the depressed classes by starting night schools, by sending Hindu missionaries to teach the higher religion to them, and by building new temples where they can worship along with their brother Hindus. We must make strenuous efforts to preserve our famous virtues of purity and temperance in the matter of food and drink. We must start Hindu orphanges and asylums where the waifs and stray of the Hindu community can be housed, lodged, educated and sent into the world of work as true Hindus. We must put our religious institutions in order. We must, in short, make a strenuous and sustained effort to study Hindu sociology and to preach and practice its central and valuable principles so as to preserve the integrity of Hindu society.

For all these and for other works of reconstruction we must have educational reconstruction. I have selected this central place for it in this chapter between the reconstruction of personal character, home life and social life and the reconstructions of science and economics and

politics, of literature and art, and of philosophy and religion, as it is the pivot of them all. How do we stand as a matter of fact? Dr. A. K. Coomaraswami says in his usual telling way: "Speak to the ordinary graduate of an Indian university, or a student from Ceylon—he will hasten to display his knowledge of Shakespeare: talk to him of religious philosophy—you find that he is an atheist of the crude type common in Europe a generation ago, and that not only has he no religion but he is as lacking in philosophy as the average Englishman; talk to him of Indian music. . . he will produce a gramophone or a harmonium, and inflict upon you one or both; talk to him of Indian dress or jewellery, he will tell you that they are uncivilised and barbaric; talk to him of Indian art—it is news to him that such a thing exists; ask him to translate for you a letter written in his own mother-tongue—he does not know it. He is indeed a stranger in his own land".

But what should true education be? It must bring out the racial traits in each child of the race till it makes him a perfect incarnation of the spirit of the race and at the same time it must make him realise his place in a scheme of cosmic progress. All other elements in a scheme of education fade into insignificance in

comparison with this supreme element. This is the acid test by which every scheme of education must be tested in India; and unless the scheme comes successfully out of the test it is a delusion, an evil, a snare, a clog, a national danger to be guarded against and put down.

On the other hand in modern education this is the most neglected and despised element. Brick and mortar occupy the foremost place, equipment comes next, and the soul comes last of all. The education of the people is not in the hands of teachers coming from within the race. The policy of education has had a career of its own, quite unconnected with the racial temperament or the racial needs. We must in all these respects effect a radical change before we can be said to have a proper educational reconstruction.

There is a great deal of wild talk in India about national education to-day. There is in fact a grave danger of the reactions of to-day being worse than the actions of yesterday. If the reconstruction of Hindu education is not on the lines pointed out above it is not Hindu and it is not national, whatever else it may be. Our education should not only be controlled and carried on by us but it should be such as to generate in our minds and our hearts a proud

and living faith in our land and in our race, to enable us to bring up our boys and girls so as to find true Hindu homes, and to enable our social and spiritual ideals to incarnate in every Hindu man and woman.

I do not mean by this that the ancient Hindu system of education should be restored. That is not possible at all. But its spirit can and must in many and wise ways be built into the present system of education, if we are to supplant the present impolicy of drift by a policy of reconstruction. But is there any conscious effort made in Hindu India to-day in this direction? Is a systematic study of Hindu pedagogy made in any quarter? Has any one even realised that this task is necessary and urgent? I am afraid not.

The first and foremost element in educational reconstruction is to lift Sanskrit and vernaculars to their lost but legitimate place in our scheme of studies. We must find a proper and prominent place for the study of Hindu literature and art and philosophy and religion, Hindu history and Hindu sociology. All these things have to go on concurrently with a mastery of western science and history and of the English language and of the essential principles of economics and politics. It is in this synthesis, as yet

unrealised and unattempted, that our safety and our salvation lie.

Mr. Fisher who recently refashioned education in England has well said: "The capital of a country does not consist in cash or paper, but in the brains and bodies of the people who inhabit it". He said further: "No state can flourish without a sound popular system of education". Education is not a training for livelihood but is a training for life—not only for life here but also for life hereafter. The real evil about the modern system of education is, in the words of Mr. Fisher, "that the wrong things are being taught by the wrong people in the wrong way". How are we going to set this right in our beloved and holy land?

We must add to book learning vocational education, education in Sanskrit and the vernaculars, nature study, and a direct touch with the living present and the living people. Education must equip men and women for citizenship; and not for mere citizenship alone (which is a purely Western conception as if human destiny is summed up in the life of the state) but also for life in its entirety and not only for life here but also for life hereafter. We must learn from Western pedagogy but cannot allow ourselves to be dominated and over-powered

and enslaved by it. As Mr. Fisher says well. "But the argument does not rest upon grounds of political prudence alone, but upon the right of human beings to be considered as ends in themselves, and to be entitled, so far as our imperfect social arrangements may permit, to know and enjoy all the best that life can offer in the sphere of knowledge, emotion and hope". Such a national education is a good national investment and true national defence. Nay, should we not take a higher view? Is it not advancing His reign to banish ignorance and sin? As Mr. Fisher says well: "There are millions and millions of men and women in this country who are not getting as much out of life as life can afford to give them". What an appalling phenomenon to contemplate? If the race expects a child to give it of its best, it must give of its best to the child. Thus education is the first charge on the energy of the people and on the revenues of the state.

A prominent aim of education should be to make each child esteem and prize as an invaluable gift the privilege of birth in the land and in the race. A man must first of all be a patriot before he can be a compatriot. Our ancestors conceived of the blessed land of India as a whole and at the same time valued birth in the Aryan

race. The two sentiments are quite congruous and proper. If both are cultivated properly and well, we are sure to achieve efficiency, harmony and power without losing our spirituality, distinctiveness, and distinction of spirit.

The physical, mental, moral, and spiritual aspects of education have to be simultaneously attended to and harmoniously improved and perfected. Our children are not only ourselves, our inheritors, our assets—but they are also pledges handed ever to us by God. Our present literary education is not even soundly literary—as it despises and neglects and excludes the Sanskrit and the vernacular languages and literatures and arts. This evil has reacted on the life of painting, music and other arts and is slowly leading to their starvation and destruction. We have to rectify our literary education and add to it scientific education, vocational education, and spiritual education. Then and then alone can we conquer our poverty of outer and of inner life.

Let me not, despite the brevity of this constructive criticism, omit to mention a few very important aspects and facts. The present neglect of the culture of memory and of music has been a most lamentable phenomenon. It has starved equally our minds and our hearts.

sense of the divine, its reverence for the divine its love and adoration for the divine. This spirituality does not consist in mere ritual or dogma or creed or even conduct, but includes them all and is their radiant and ambrosial fruit. Sister Nivedita says well: "This is the illumination that India calls the knowledge of unity, and the gradual appropriation of it by the whole nature, so that it ceases to be mere words and becomes a living actuality, she names as realisation. Thus every step, every movement in life is either dull and dead, or on fire with the growing knowledge that we know as spirituality". If we preserve and perfect this, everything else will be added unto us even more than erewhile in our glorious past. Then will come the fulfilment of Hindu culture, and the radiance of Hindu culture will shine forth in peerless splendour all over the world. Let me conclude this book with the following poem of mine:

Crowned with the loftiest mountain's spotless [snows
Thy lotus feet kissed by the smiling seas,
Around thy form a tranquil sunlit peace
Or dark-hued clouds lit with the lightning's [glows
Thou shinest. Nature in her gladness throws

Each year an emerald mantle o'er thy trees
And fruitful fields. The amorous southern
[breeze
Breathes fragrance as it softly sings and goes.
What joy to have the blessed gift of birth
In Thee, with low-bowed heads to kiss thy
[frame,
To gaze upon Thy glorious golden face,
O Sweetest 'mid Thy sister climes on earth
O Thou with sweet symphonious heavenly
[name,
O Thou bright-dowered with God's benig-
[nant Grace !